STATUS OF SPECIAL PRIMARY SCHOOLS/UNITS PHYSICAL SAFETY IN KITUI COUNTY, KENYA

BY

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MAY, 2014
Declaration

This research project report is my original work and has never been presented for an award of a degree in any other university.

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Date: 23-05-2014

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Dedication

The study is dedicated to my family members – Anthony, Cecilia, Veronica and Kelvin. My gratitude also goes to my mother Veronicah Maumo for her encouragement and moral support.
Acknowledgement

I acknowledge with appreciation the help of those without whom the completion of this work would have been very difficult. Special thanks to my supervisors Mrs. Lillian Boit and Dr. Joseph Mungai for their patience and the spirited guidance and attention that they gave me throughout the study.

I also acknowledge with appreciation the contribution of the selected study respondents disaggregated in their various categories as: head teachers, teachers/support staff and children with special needs for sparing sometime within their tight schedules to timely respond to all study questionnaires. Without your participation in giving the desired data of interest in the study, it would not have been successful.

I am grateful to the County Director of Education-Kitui County, for humbly and timely issuing me with the research authorization permit, to conduct this study in the special needs special primary school/units within the county. I also thank all the District Education Officers-of the districts within which the special needs special primary school/units are located for accepting my request to conduct this study in their districts. I as well thank all the school management committees for allowing me to carry out this study in their premises.

Finally, I am deeply grateful to Ms Susan for her support during the study and I also appreciate my daughter: Cecilia Musangi for editing and proof reading my work. I finally acknowledge my husband Anthony Mutwii for financial and moral support.
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<tr>
<td>CDE</td>
<td>County Director of Education</td>
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<td>CWS</td>
<td>Church World Services</td>
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<td>EARCs</td>
<td>Educational Assessment and Resource Centres</td>
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<td>EFA</td>
<td>Education for All</td>
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<td>FPE</td>
<td>Free Primary Education</td>
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<td>GOK</td>
<td>Government of Kenya</td>
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<td>ICP</td>
<td>Inclusive Curriculum Project</td>
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<td>IEP</td>
<td>Individualized Educational Program</td>
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<td>KISE</td>
<td>Kenya Institute of Special Education</td>
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<td>KLB</td>
<td>Kenya Literature Bureau</td>
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<td>KNSPWD</td>
<td>Kenya National Survey for Persons with Disabilities</td>
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<td>LEA</td>
<td>Local Education Authority</td>
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<td>MDGs</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<td>MOE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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<td>NCSTI</td>
<td>National Council of Science Technology and Innovation</td>
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<td>PWDs</td>
<td>Persons with Disabilities</td>
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<td>SAC</td>
<td>School Advisory Committee</td>
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<td>SNE</td>
<td>Special Needs Education</td>
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<td>SSM</td>
<td>Safety Standards Manual</td>
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<td>SSZ</td>
<td>School Safe Zones</td>
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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to find out the status of special primary schools/units physical safety and to give suggestions on how to minimize safety hazards and make special primary schools/units safe zones for learners. The study was guided by several objectives all aimed at finding out the current status of special primary schools/units physical safety. It assessed threats to special primary schools/units physical safety, learners’ attitudes to their physical safety, challenges of providing and maintaining adequate physical safety in special primary schools/units and strategies of improving status of special primary schools/units physical safety for pupils with special needs in Kitui County, Kenya. This study was found to be of significance at this time because; safety in special primary schools/units is of paramount importance and has been neglected overtime. Pupils of all ages are entitled to a safe school learning environment. The environment has a huge impact on the pupils and as such if there is a feeling of lack of safety among pupils, they become inattentive in class making learning and acquisition of life skills difficult. To a special child therefore, the school safety needs surpasses all the other needs. Descriptive survey research design was adopted and purposive sampling technique used to select the respondents comprising of school head teachers, teachers, support staff and learners. Data collection instruments included questionnaires, interviews, and observation. Data was analysed using both quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques. The study findings showed that the physical safety in special primary schools/units for children with special needs was inadequate, therefore, safety threats existed in the selected special primary schools/units, the learners’ attitudes towards their safety in the selected special primary schools/units was negative and there were challenges in provision and maintenance of physical safety in the selected special primary schools/units. The study made the following recommendations: There should be (i) Collaboration of all stakeholders to come up with a working safety policy framework for children with special needs ;(ii) Adherence to safety guidelines and precautions as stipulated by the Ministry of Education to enhance safety for children with special needs in the selected special primary schools/units and (iii) Ministry of Education officials should beef up their visits to selected special primary schools/units for evaluation of how the safety guidelines are implemented in the specific selected special primary schools/units.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Safety at schools is beginning to receive attention in Kenya as articulated in day to day media reports. Special primary schools/units as sites of teaching and learning can deliver their educational mandate only in safe and secure conditions, free from injuries, crime, and violence. Basic school safety and security features are therefore essential at special primary schools/units. Safety and security of the schools’ physical environment is a starting point for overall school safety. School safety requires learning and constant vigilance and has to be everyone’s responsibility. Everyone in the school fraternity should be involved in school safety. It should be addressed through a comprehensive approach that focuses on prevention, intervention, and response planning. The right to education is a universal entitlement, a right that is recognized as a human right for all persons with and without disability. This right encompasses also the obligation to eliminate discrimination at all levels of the educational system, to set minimum standards and to improve quality (Government of Kenya (GOK), 1980).

Persons and children with special needs have their education centered on three main areas thus providing learners with special needs special means of accessing the curriculum by providing special equipment, adapted materials and giving attention to positioning for effective learning; provision of a special or modified curriculum which is either adapted, adopted or specialized depending on the needs of the child; the availability of the social structure and emotional climate which must be conducive for learning. To achieve these, safety of children with special needs in our special primary
schools/units at all times, and everywhere can never be underscored. Their safety bypasses many other things while at school because they are very vulnerable to personal threats, insecurity, poor infrastructure, accidents, violence and harassment, armed conflicts and hostile environment (GOK, 2009).

Threats to learners require to be addressed carefully and it was in this context that the Ministry of Education (MOE) in 2003, entered into a partnership programme with Church World Services (CWS) for School Safe Zones (SSZ). This partnership resulted into the Production of Safety Standards Manual for use in all Kenyan special primary schools/units (GOK, 2008). School safety is an indispensable component in the process of teaching and learning. Certainly no meaningful teaching or learning can occur in an environment that lacks safety to both the teachers and the learners. This is to a greater magnitude when it comes to children with special needs. Their safety is paramount. It is therefore the responsibility of the learners, staff, parents and all the other stake holders to make the school an all round safe living.

All special primary schools/units and school systems are subject to the safety manual as it relates to pupils’ safety while in school. However, having a Safety Standards Manual in school and having a safe school environment are two different things. Going by observation, many special primary schools/units are seen to have old and unmaintained buildings that can fall anytime. Such buildings pose physical insecurity and pupils are at risk of losing their lives or being critically hurt. Needless to say, such buildings are likely to lack many essential things like locks, alarms, lighting, safe floors and more. Physical school environment encompasses the school buildings and all its contents including physical structures, infrastructure, furniture and the use and
presence of chemical and biological agents; the site on which a school is located, and the surrounding environment.

Provision of safe and sufficient water and sanitation is a basic necessity for a healthy and safe learning environment. This is because the physical school environment has a strong influence on learners’ health due to several reasons such as: Contaminated water, for example, can result to diseases such as diarrhea while polluted air can cause respiratory infections that can trigger asthma attacks thus affecting learning and academic achievement. It is therefore very important to have a safe physical environment for learners because it improves learners’ health thus effective learning.

Kitui County experiences drought every now and then making the problem of unsafe food and water common in special primary schools/units [(GOK, (2008) in The Kitui North District Development Plan 2088-2012)]. To address the above issues and many others, it is mandatory that all special primary schools and units should have well trained staff, Safety Advisory Committee (SAC), fire safety measures, school building specifications and any other measure that promotes school safety (GOK, ibid). The Kenya Government’s commitment to the safety and overall welfare of learners and especially learners culminated into a Safety Standards Manual for Special primary school/units in Kenya.

This manual among other things emphasizes on safety in physical infrastructure, school environment, and the participation of school administrators in implementing these policies. Knowledge of school safety laws and regulations provide administrators with the authority to know what is allowed, what is forbidden as well as what actions are considered to be an obligation of the school.
According to Otieno (2010), it had emerged that most special primary schools/units in Kenya were yet to have adequate capacity to handle physical safety insecurity emergencies. However, it had been noted in the recent Kenyan presidential appointed task force on Realignment of Kenyan education system with the Constitution of Kenya, (2010) and with the achievement of Kenya’s development blue print commonly called Vision 2030, that the Kenyan education system was not yet responsive to the standardised safety requirements for children with special needs (GOK, 2012). Most special primary school/units were yet to implement these safety guidelines five years down the line from 2008 when they were constituted (GOK, 2012).

Internationally, according to Arkansas school facility manual, the Arkansas department of education (ADE) is charged with overseeing the design and construction of school facilities.

The Arkansas school facility manual provides consistent, clear information for school districts and professionals as a new generation of schools is being created for Arkansas. The standards and guidelines contained in the manual are the culmination of standards, accepted procedures, statutory requirements and experience of experts and authorities across the United State of America and establish a uniform level of quality of all public school buildings. (Barmett, 2002).

In the United Kingdom (UK); the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA) initiated a project aimed at producing a training resource for schools which would help them address there responsibilities dubbed “Together Safety;
Developing a Whole School Approach to Health and Safety "..." this encourages schools to develop an ethos that promotes health and safety (Kemp & Sibert 1992). According to Montee (2008), Missouri school children in the United States of America (USA) are faced with a variety of school safety issues including prevention of unauthorized entry, vandalism and theft, alcohol and drug usage, fighting, disrespect of school personnel; weapons brought to school, lack of funding to purchase equipment and security services needed, denial that a school violence situation could occur, some schools have not established safety committee and schools do not conduct safety drills for many types of hazards.

The administrative and management practices of the schools' leadership have a tremendous influence on the safety issues and climate of the school. Mc Evoy and Walker (2000) have reviewed the research on this important dimension and argue that school climate must be fully addressed to make schools safer and more academically effective. Research indicates that safer schools tend to be more effective schools and vice versa (Furlong & Morrison, 2000)

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Status of Special Primary Schools/Units physical safety can impact positively or negatively in the education of children with special needs. Children with special needs continue to face obstacles to learning, safety needs being one of them. Safety within the school is assumed by many, but perhaps a less understood determinant to participation in basic education for children with special needs.
An unsafe learning environment is among the reasons many of them loath school or refuse to enroll at all. Schools’ safety is an integral and indispensable component of the teaching and learning process. Indeed no meaningful teaching and learning can take place in an environment that is unsafe and insecure to both learners and staff. It is therefore important that educational stakeholders foster safe and secure school environment (Republic of Kenya, 2008).

Institutions in Kenya have a long standing history of ghastly disaster leading to damages and injuries. Examples of such incidents are like St. Kizito incident of 13th July 1991, where girls were raped by their male counter parts (Ndirangu, 1991), Nyeri high school fire that burnt four prefects to death (Mwaniki, 1991) and the fire tragedy at Kyanguhi secondary school where 68 lives were lost and scores of other students injured on 27th March, 2001 (Njuguna, 2001).

What is common to these instances is that they all seem to have occurred in and around school campuses and mostly during school hours or at night which highlights vulnerability of Special Primary Schools/Units to safety-threatening instances. In this study, the researcher seeks to investigate the status of safety and security features of school’s physical environments as aspects of School safety in relation to children with special needs.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess physical safety status in relation to overall performance of children with special needs at primary school education level in Kitui County with the aim of suggesting possible remedial strategies for minimizing the vice in Kenya and elsewhere.
1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

i. To establish current physical safety status in special primary schools/units in Kitui County.

ii. To establish current threats to safety in relation to special needs children in Kitui County.

iii. To establish learners’ attitude to safety in special primary schools/units in Kitui County.

iv. To identify challenges of maintaining safety in special primary schools/units in Kitui County.

v. To suggest strategies for improving safety in special primary schools/units in Kitui County.

1.5 Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

i. What status is the physical safety in special primary schools/units in Kitui County?

ii. What are the threats to safety in special primary schools/units in Kitui County?

iii. What are the learners’ attitudes to safety in special primary schools/units in Kitui County?

iv. What safety maintenance challenges affect special primary schools/units in Kitui County?

v. What strategies can improve safety status in special primary schools/units in Kitui County?
1.6 Significance of the Study

Information from this study provided an insight into the best ways of ensuring learner’s safety needs is attended to while in school. When safety needs are provided within the school compound, it is always a motivation to the learners because fear and anxiety of uncertainty is alleviated. This results to improved grades and general well being of the learners. When completed, the study was significant in a number of ways. The researcher hopes that this study is useful and applicable in a number of ways. The School stakeholders such as the teachers, parents, pupils, Board of Governors and School Management Committees will realize the need to have safe special primary schools/units and the implication to school performance. It will make Education Officers aware of the seriousness of the problem at hand. Study findings therefore justify the need for more funding to special primary schools/units in order to put in place appropriate infrastructure. Finally, this study form the basis for further research on the ways of enhancing safety in special primary schools/units and especially those offering special needs education in Kitui County. This should lead to the generation of new ideas, and in conjunction with other knowledge already present in many publications and literature result to proper, better and efficient management of special primary schools/units in Kitui County as well as in the other regions of Kenya.

1.7 Delimitations of the Study

This study was done in public boarding special primary schools and units in Kitui County. Units are special classes attached to main stream primary schools to provide instructions and support to children with special needs. It was not possible to include public regular primary schools though there are special learners in them because this requires considerable time, resources and other logistics. Although there are several
factors in special primary schools and units that can be researched on, this study only focused on the physical status of school safety in relation to children with special needs. The research was confined to special primary schools/units only because of lack of enough resources to carry out a large survey involving both special and regular primary schools.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

This research was conducted only in a small size of population because of the constraints of time and finance. Secondly the use of sign language to interpret information in the questionnaires for the deaf learners at times changed the intended meaning. Blind learners as well needed readers and this made them use longer time than intended. Thirdly, the special primary schools/units that were used are far apart with poor roads. It was not easy therefore to reach these special primary schools and units.

1.9 Assumptions of the Study

The researcher assumed that:-

i. All the Special Primary Schools and Units had certain challenges that were unique from those that existed in regular primary schools in matters of physical safety needs.

ii. Children with special needs need more safety precautions than their regular School counterparts in regular Primary Schools

iii. The entire special needs school management work towards fulfilling the physical safety challenges in relation to children with special needs.
1.10 Theoretical Framework

This study was based on Hierarchical Human Needs’ Theory pioneered by Abraham Maslow in (1970). According to Maslow’s (1970) hierarchical human needs’ theory, man is a human being in the process of becoming. Therefore the theory postulates that: Man is a creature with abundant possibilities of what he or she can or would like to become. The process of becoming is oriented to, physiological (physical), safety or security assurance, affective or love, belonging or socialization/self esteem and self actualization needs in that order.

Some individuals, because of their circumstances, might not satisfy even the lowest two (physiological and safety needs) out of the five categories in the hierarchy of the human needs described above as shown in Figure 1.1. Safety needs refer to the organism’s requirements of an orderly, stable and predictable world or living environment. In this study, therefore, absence of these needs would endanger the physical safety of a primary school child and induce anxiety and insecurity among these children in their school compound.

![Diagram of Maslow's Hierarchical Human Needs Theory](source)

**Source:** Maslow A., (1970). *Hierarchical human physical and psychosocial needs’ theory*

**Figure 1.1: Theoretical Framework based on Maslow’s Hierarchical Human Needs’ Theory**
Maslow (1970) represented human needs as a pyramid with the more basic needs at the bottom. He uses the terms physiological, safety, belongingness and love, esteem and self actualization needs to describe the pattern that human motivations generally move through. According to Maslow (1970), within the hierarchy of human needs; safety takes precedence and dominates the human behavior after all physiological human needs have been met. Maslow (1970) concluded that the safety and security needs may therefore include: Personal security, health and well being, Safety net against accidents/ illness and their adverse impacts on the human well being. Therefore, in his theory, Maslow (1970) postulated that: Absence of physical safety would undoubtedly make human beings (people) to experience stress.

By extension, in this study it was expected that, special needs learners would experience stress in absence of physical safety in their Special Primary Schools/Units. It was against this backdrop that, this study sought to unravel through scientific investigation the status of special primary schools/units physical safety in relation to overall performance of special needs pupils in Kitui County, Kenya.
1.11 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a research tool intended to develop awareness and understanding of the situation under study and it communicates how of the enquiry as shown in Figure 1.2.

**Independent Variables**

- **Status of School Physical Safety**
  - Specially designed toilets
  - Mobile chairs for use when in toilets
  - Classroom/dormitories floor conditions

- **Dependent Variable**
  - **Threats to School Physical Safety**
    - Exposed electric wires
    - Rugged classroom/dormitory floors
    - Exposed electric lamps in classrooms
  - **Learners' Attitude towards School Safety**
    - Negative due to low status of safety or
    - Positive due to low status of safety
  - **Challenges Facing Maintenance of Safety**
    - Inadequate funding from government
    - Understaffing leading to no personnel
  - **Strategies for Improvement of Safety**
    - Training teachers on safety measures
    - Increased funding for special schools
    - Involve all stakeholders in special needs

**Moderating/Intervening**

- Government’s policy on provision of primary school special needs pupils' safety facilities
- Physical safety of special primary schools/units for pupils with special needs

**Figure 1.2 Conceptual Framework**

According to Figure 1.2 the conceptual framework identifies factors that influence status of special primary schools/units physical safety in relation to overall performance in education for children with special needs as captured in this study. The aim of this study was to investigate the status of special primary schools/units physical safety in relation to overall performance of children with special needs in
Kitui County, Kenya. As shown in Figure 1.2, each of the variables in the conceptual framework is independent in relation to overall performance of children with special needs in the study area.

1.12 Definition of Significant Terms

In this section the meaning of terms as used in this study was defined. However, the definition herein is made for purposes of clarity of information studied. The following are some of the terms with specific meaning for this study.

**Children with Special Needs**-Those children who have specific needs, as those associated with disability to such an extent that special programming are necessary in order to maximize their potential or performance level.

**Disability**-A defect which results in some malfunction or a restriction to perform an activity in the manner considered normal for human beings but which may not necessarily affect the individual’s normal life.

**Safety**-The state of being safe or the condition of being protected against physical, social, spiritual, financial, political, emotional, occupational, psychological, educational or other types, of consequences, considered undesirable.

**Special Needs Education**-A programme of instructions specially designed to meet the children with special needs of a child with special educational needs.

**Special Schools**-A system of educational status for those pupils or students who experience difficulties of varying types and importance in their schools as a result of their environmental or hereditary factors, and physical or mental disorders.

**Special Units**-Classes in mainstream setting that provide instructional support to children with special needs.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction
This chapter looks at the review of related literature and is meant to gain background information related to the problem that was investigated. The chapter therefore provides literature review on various issues notably, Policy guidelines and laws related to children with special needs education, New constitution in relation to special education and persons with disability, Physical safety in special primary school/units, Special education support system, Curriculum and other related issues.

2.2 Status of Special Primary Schools/Units Physical Safety
Children with special needs can be viewed as those learners with significant difficulties different from those of their peers with school work, communication or behavior. Special education needs is a concept that is socially influenced by the prevalent expectations about children with special needs’ progress, political and economical concerns. All learners regardless of their physical, cognitive and affective nature are naturally curious and learn by sight, hearing, touching, smelling and tasting things around them in either home or school environment. However, unlike their regular counterparts, children with special needs do not understand that they can be seriously injured by some of these things in their environment, such as touching a hot stove burner or tasting a cleaning agent that may look like or smell like a juice. Creating a safe school environment is therefore of paramount importance in special primary schools/units to ensure that children with special needs can explore and experience the world around them without risk of injury. Children with special needs are at an increased risk of school physical injuries including falls, burns, drowning
and may require additional safety precautions due to their physical or cognitive abilities. Creating a safe environment for a child or children with special needs is an important step to ensuring continued well-being of the special needs children in selected special primary schools/units.

Kirui, Mbugua and Sang (2011) concurs with Omolo et al (2010) that almost all schools’ compounds (93.33%) were fenced using either barbed wires or live fences. Barbed wire could pose danger to special children especially the blind and the deafblind.

According to the report by the Task Force on Realignment of Kenyan education system with the Constitution of Kenya, (2010) and with the achievement of Kenya’s development blue print commonly called Vision 2030: The Kenyan education system is not yet responsive to the standardised safety requirements for children with special needs (GOK, 2012). According to the report; most subject areas of the 8-4-4 primary school education curriculum need to be adapted to special needs requirements and some areas may also be prepared a fresh to avoid shutting out children with special needs from enjoying the inclusive education programme with their regular normal primary school counterparts (GOK, 2012).

In Kenya, a manual for safety guidelines has been developed by the ministry of education. It outlines all the areas and how safety should be maintained in special primary school/units (GOK, 2003). In the school safety standard No. 9, safety of children with special needs/students with special needs is discussed at length. The government recognizes the need to enable children with special needs to access
education at all levels without discrimination (GOK, 2012). It is the policy of the
government to integrate or mainstream learners with mild special needs into regular
school programmes to enhance their participation in formal education. The special
primary school/units therefore should have learning environments that are safe and
caring and those that cater for the requirements of children with special needs (GOK,
2012).

The manual guidelines thus outline the following for special primary schools/units in
regards to safety for children with special needs (GOK, 2003): Provide access paths to
different status within the school compound; Support children with special needs by
ensuring that the teaching and learning environment is responsive to their needs
including provision of remedial teaching; Adhere to guidelines to ensure school
premises are structurally safe. They should have appropriate runways, ramps and
stairways for all those who are children with special needs or have special educational
needs; Take appropriate measures such as sensitization and counseling to ensure that
children with special needs are not stigmatized or discriminated against by their peers
and teachers; and Train children with special needs and educators on life skills and
protection strategies against sexual harassment (GOK, 2012).

2.3 Threats to Status of Special Primary Schools/Units Physical Safety
Threats to learners require to be addressed carefully and it was in this context that the
Ministry of Education (MOE) in 2003, entered into a partnership programme with
Church World Services (CWS) for School Safe Zones (SSZ). This partnership resulted
into the Production of Safety Standards Manual for use in all Kenyan schools (GOK,
2008). School safety is an indispensable component in the process of teaching and
learning. Certainly no meaningful teaching or learning can occur in an environment that lacks safety to both the teachers and the learners. This is to a greater magnitude when it comes to children with special needs. Their safety is paramount. It is therefore the responsibility of the learners, staff, parents and all the other stake holders to make the school an all round safe living. It is therefore imperative to develop a national policy that comprehensively defines and identifies areas of special educational needs. Comprehensive children with special needs education policy framework is essential to guide the work of all actors involved in provision of children with special needs education to ensure consistency and a coordinated implementation.

In Kenya, persons with disability represent a population of over three million disabled persons. This is according to a survey done by the Ministry of Planning and National Development in 2010. Disabled persons are marginalized in Kenya just like in many other developing countries. They face problems as a result of their disability such as: access to education, health, employment or rehabilitation. The majority experience hardships as a result of inbuilt social, cultural and economic prejudices, stigmatization and more often abuse and violence. To address all these and many more the final policy framework draft (GOK 2009) came up with the following guidelines for consideration: Professional delivery services to the children with special needs for the best of their interests; Equal access to all educational institutions by children with special needs; Equitable access to services that meet the needs of individual children with special needs within diverse learning environments; Non-discrimination in enrolment and retention of children with special needs in any institution of learning.
Barriers to free transition of children with special needs through the various education levels in accordance with their abilities; Learners-centered curriculum and responsive learning systems and materials; Holistic realization of the full potential of children with special needs; Protection of the human dignity and rights of children with special needs; Gender parity applying equally to men, women, boys and girls with children with special needs; Active and proactive primary role of parents and families as caregivers and health providers of their learners; and Equal opportunities for all children with special needs.

Although the Kenyan children with special needs policy framework have very good guidelines, implementation of these guidelines by the stakeholders in their different capacities has been an issue. This can only be possible with well stipulated laws on children with special needs education (GOK, 2003). Much of the documentation concerning children with special needs in Kenya have been done, not much has been done on how to promote physical safety for the children with special needs in the context of the special education school environment. This study focused on the status of special primary schools/units physical safety of children with special needs in Kitui County, aiming at establishing the existing gaps and helping the MOE officials in their work, by using the recommendations of this study for harnessing status of school physical safety in the selected special primary schools/units in Kenya and elsewhere.

2.4 Learners’ Attitudes towards Status of Special Primary Schools/Units Physical Safety

Persons with disability Act came into operation in June 2004. The Act discourages discrimination against persons with children with special needs (PWDs). According to
the Act, PWDs are to be accorded full access to community and social services, as well as to available information and technical assistance. The measures to be taken to make this happen include identification and elimination of obstacles and barriers to accessing buildings, roads, transport and other indoor and outdoor status including schools/units, housing, medical status and workplaces (GOK, 2003).

According to Kenya National Survey for persons and children with special needs (KNSPWD) in 2008, two-thirds of PWDs had a big problem accessing their natural environment and this no doubt includes special primary schools/units (GOK, 2008). The survey showed that only 52.7 percent of PWDs said that special primary schools/units were available and accessible. Likewise 43 percent said that they had never attended school even though the special primary schools/units were available. This shows that there is need for the government to implement and enforce disability Act 2003. Persons with special needs need to work, move and integrate in a fully accessible environment with others (GOK, 2003).

This can only be done by ensuring that special primary schools/units have safe infrastructure, water, food and equipments: Special primary schools/units without such equipments are prone to certain dangers and ill health. When the learners' health is not good, all the other areas of the learners' development are affected. The outcome in school therefore is poor performance. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) established a unifying set of developmental objectives for the global community (UN, 1995). Bringing together United Nations agencies, governments and civil society around eight key development issues, the MDGs foster collaborative action to reduce poverty, improve health and address educational and environmental
concerns around the world’s most pressing development problems. The MDGs are specifically designed to address the needs of the world’s poorest citizens and the world’s most marginalized populations (UN, 1995).

The MDGs will not be achieved in Kenya if her policies, programmes, monitoring and evaluation do not include persons with special needs and those who are children with special needs (UN, 2012). While persons with children with special needs make up ten per cent of the world’s population, disability is associated with twenty per cent of global poverty according to the World Bank’s findings. By 1995 there were no references to persons who were children with special needs either in the MDGs themselves or in the accompanying body of guidelines and policies. The international community needed to urgently act to mainstream special needs and physically disabled persons in the MDG processes (UN, 2003).

2.5 Challenges Facing Provision of Physical Safety

In Kenya, the Kenya Literature Bureau (KLB) has made an effort to develop pre-school curriculum for learners with visual and hearing impairments; developmental and independent living skills syllabus for learners with visual impairments; perceptual training, communication and mathematical skills syllabuses for learners with mental handicaps; foundation syllabus for learners who are deaf; ongoing syllabus preparation for learners who are deaf/blind; certificate curriculum for children with special needs education teachers and various diploma curricula for children with special needs education (GOK, 2009). Despite this effort in Kenya; it is also notable that several other curricula and examination support materials for children with
special needs are required to be developed/revised or reviewed to enhance safety and learn ability of the children with special needs (GOK, 2009).

As compared to Kenyan special needs education provision, in England and Wales the special primary school/units follow the mainstream curriculum with modifications and adaptation necessary to ensure full access to the regular mainstream curriculum. It is highly stressed in these special primary schools/units that all pupils should have access to a common set of subject syllabi with the same quality of subject content. This enhances equal learning opportunities and experiences for all pupils to become educated persons. Each pupil follows his/her Individualized Educational Programme (IEP) which is agreed upon and revised annually during an IEP conference meeting with the involvement of all professionals working with the children with special needs department: school administration, teachers, local education authorities (LEAs), parents and sometimes the special needs’ pupils themselves.

Although pupils with special needs are generally included within the mainstream education system in England and Wales rather than special primary schools/units, a number of special primary school/units still function to cater for the more demanding needs and to satisfy the wishes and expectations of parents who consider that their children can receive a better educational service in a special school where there may be better educational provision than that obtainable in mainstream school.

The existing special primary schools/units in England and Wales are networked so that they can complement each other’s services and facilities and also to work closer with mainstream special primary schools/units. The special primary schools/units aim to
provide an education tailored to meet the needs of the individual student. The skills covered are cognitive, gross motor, social, language both receptive and expressive, self-help, cooking, sewing and others. Good health, personal hygiene and training for adult life are promoted and given utmost importance. Over the years, substantial investment has been made in these special primary schools/units in order to provide all the required facilities and services to ensure adequate physical safety of the special learners.

The Kenyan children with special needs sector can learn lessons from the provision of the special education in England and Wales through both their mainstream regular special primary school/units and their counterparts the children with special needs special primary school/units. However, the Kenyan education for children with special needs and especially those who are children with special needs has faced several challenges with regard to the curriculum development (GOK, 2009). The curriculum and support materials for these learners come later when their counterparts in regular special primary schools/units set up are already familiar with the curriculum contents and requirements. These delays make the pupils lag behind in the syllabus implementation which in long-term adversely affects the performance of the selected special primary schools/units in the national examinations (GOK, 2009).

In some cases, by the time the curriculum is designed for the children with special needs, new changes in the already designed regular school curriculum may be taking shape again in the same curriculum hence the vicious cycle of lagging behind the other pupils by the special needs primary school pupils. Other problems have been
rigid and inaccessible special needs education curriculum and rigid methods of the evaluation of implementation of the special needs education curriculum.

The Inclusive Curriculum Project (ICP) in England and Wales aims at raising the standard of educational achievement for all pupils with special needs, ensuring that all pupils have access to similar syllabus. The ICP has provided a vast repertoire of teaching activities and ideas intended for all ages and abilities. The ICP also aims at enhancing teachers to develop their professional skills thus improving their classroom practice for all pupils regardless of their special needs and abilities.

Kenya can learn lessons from the ICP in England and Wales with the aim of raising the standard of educational achievement for all pupils with special needs, ensuring that all pupils have access to similar syllabus content. However, in Kenya, most subject areas of the 8-4-4 primary school education curriculum need to be adapted to special needs requirements and some areas may also be prepared a fresh to avoid shutting out children with special needs and even those who are children with special needs from enjoying the inclusive education programme with their regular normal primary school counterpart pupils (GOK, 2009).

Coming back home, Kirui, Mbugua and Sang (2011) sought to determine challenges facing head teachers in security management in public secondary schools in Kisii county in Kenya. The study established that schools in Kisii county face security challenges such as strikes, arson, theft and fighting among students but the majority of head teachers, Board of Governors members and security personnel are not versed with strategies useful in handling security issues. Most schools are not prepared for
disaster management. Their study concluded that schools in general need to implement in full the Safety Standards Manual for schools in Kenya guidelines recommended by the Ministry of Education.

2.6 Strategies for Improving Status of Special Primary Schools/Units Physical Safety

To provide and maintain the required physical safety for the children with special needs, the School safety programme should have policies on their safety within the school grounds, infrastructure, hygiene, environment, food and water. The school safety policy should as well include safety against poisonous and non-poisonous drugs and substance abuse, teaching environment, child abuse, transportation, disaster and emergency preparedness (GOK, 2003). The purpose of educational support system is to ensure that all pupils, regardless of their eligibility for categorical programs achieve basic skills, meet Vermont standards and experience success in the general education environment. It is helpful to think of an Educational support system as a safety net of programs and supports around regular education components like curriculum, instruction, standards and assessments.

According to the Kenyan recent education commission on alignment of education system with the Constitution of Kenya 2010 and to Kenya’s socioeconomic development blue print popularly known as Vision 2030, the Odhiambo task force report of 2012; the GOK has since, the year 2012 been implementing measures aimed at improving the participation of children with special needs at all levels of education from pre-primary school education through primary school education to secondary school education and tertiary as well as higher or university education (GOK, 2012).
Earlier under the free primary education (FPE) reintroduced in 2003, additional capitation grants were provided to children with special needs enrolled in special education institutions and units attached to regular primary schools. These grants were used in removing existing barriers that might make most of the primary school environment unfriendly to many of the children with special needs. They also facilitated procurement of the necessary teaching/learning materials and equipment for children with special needs. Also it is through, the government efforts, that special education teachers are trained in skills for handling special needs children at the Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE) where they graduate with either a Certificate in Special Education or a Diploma in Special Education. As well Degree Certificates in Special Education from most of the Universities in Kenya are also offered in order to improve the necessary national capacity for handling children with special needs. The government has put in place a policy framework regarding children with special needs and the implementation strategies of the children with special needs education curriculum have been put in place as well (GOK, 2006).

Educational Assessment and Resource Centre’s (EARCs) have been developed all over the country which assesses and places children with special needs to special primary schools/units. The EARCs as well sensitize the public on special educational needs. The special support systems currently put in place in Kenya are: Special needs teacher training; Supply of special needs equipment to resource centre’s; Advocacy and awareness creation; Provision of grants to purchase equipment and teaching/learning materials and provision of grants to special primary schools/units for payment of non-teaching staff (GOK, 2003).
Assessment of pupils; Guidance and counseling; Technical aids and equipment like hearing aids, and white canes and Provision for education to all inclusive learners regardless of their physical ability. Educational Assessment and Resource centers should be staffed with personnel that are well trained on safety issues in relation to children with special needs. This supplements on the support systems in place and improve on status of special primary schools/units physical safety already in place.

There is need therefore to improve on the existing support system in special primary schools/units (GOK, 2012).

Institutions for children with special needs are very few in comparison with those of regular learners. Apart from inadequate institutions, there are other challenges faced by this category of learners. These include inadequate funding from the government; inadequate specially trained teachers; skilled counselors, specialized resources and status. To add to these, some learners are not identified for educational assessment and placement until it is too late in their adult life. Many institutions for children with special needs are ill equipped with safety measures. The extent to which each nation’s special primary schools/units provide a safe and healthy physical environment plays a significant role in determining whether the next generation is educated and healthy. Effective school safety programme is a viable means to address the goals of Education for All (EFA) (GOK, 2012).

Compared to the physical safety care offered by special primary schools/units for pupils with special needs in England and Wales; special transport arrangements, including escorts and safety harnesses are available for learners with special needs and especially the children with special needs attending both the special needs and
those enrolled in the mainstream regular primary schools in the inclusive education system (GOK, 2012).

The Local Education Authorities (LEA) in England and Wales through the Inclusive Curriculum Project (ICP) provide information to parents in relation to the entitlements of children with special needs; assess and review the resources required by children with special needs; ensures that progress of pupils with children with special needs is monitored and reviewed; reviews the education provision for adults with children with special needs and advises educational institutions on the best practices and identifying appropriate and safe educational physical settings for individual children and especially those children with special needs.

Kenya can learn lessons from the ICP in England and Wales with the aim of raising the standard of educational achievement for all pupils with special needs, ensuring that all pupils have access to similar syllabus content. However, in Kenya, most subject areas of the 8-4-4 primary school education curriculum need to be adapted to special needs requirements and some areas may also be prepared a fresh to avoid shutting out children with special needs and even those who are severely challenged from enjoying the inclusive education programme with their regular primary school counterpart pupils (GOK, 2009).

2.7 Summary of Reviewed Literature and Research Gaps Identified

Safety is always an important concern for everybody. When it comes to children with special needs, safety can become an even bigger concern. It can go beyond teaching them not to walk in front of an oncoming vehicle or that fire can burn. Teaching
children with special needs about danger and safety can be difficult. You might not be able to tell if they are focused enough to know what you are teaching them or you might not be able to get them to show you they understand and are learning. Children with special needs are unique therefore they should be treated specially and that is why this study underscores the importance of physical safety in special primary schools/units that care for such learners. It is the duty of the school therefore to supervise and watch for hazards that can bring about accidents. The school equipment, surfaces, foods, infrastructure, just to mention but a few, should be in safe condition.

Threats to school can emanate internally within the school environment or externally from the wider community as indicated in the MOE safety standard manual (republic of Kenya, 2008). The main causes of accidents in schools are human related caused through carelessness, in attentiveness, ignorance, irresponsibility or negligence on the part of the learners, staff or other stakeholders in general. Accidental injuries can be caused by slippery surfaces, wet greasy spot, clutter on the floor (too many scattered things), poorly placed furniture such as desks, benches and tables, weak railings, insufficient lighting sitting carelessly on desks for example with feet blocking aisles, poor ventilation an sharp instruments.

Kirui et al (2011) found out that only 37% of school heads had attended any security management course as compared to 21.4%of Board of Governors members and 40% of security guards. This indicated that most school heads and BOG members who are responsible for making decision concerning security may be approaching security issues ignorantly and thereby endangering life and property. The study further found
out that the budgetency allocation the BOG on security issues was below 10% of the total school budget. This was due to competing interests.

The managers of the special primary schools/units should be responsible for learners’ safety while at school at all times. Therefore, there is need for special primary schools/units safety policy framework that contains details of what every special primary schools/unit management is responsible for and what should be put in place to ensure safety for pupils with special needs. The status of physical school safety in relation to children with special needs in many special primary schools/units leaves a lot to be desired. The researcher came up with findings on this topic and drew recommendations that aimed at improving the deteriorating situation of physical safety status among the selected special primary schools/units.
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the research design, population and selection of samples, methods of gathering information from/or about these samples by use of specific research instruments which was valid and reliable.

3.2 Research Design

The researcher used survey research design. This is because survey produces data based on real-world observations (empirical data) and can be generalised to a population. Surveys can produce a large amount of data in a short time for a fairly low cost. It can employ a range of methods to answer the study’s research question (Denscombe, 1998).

3.3 Study Locale

The research design covered selected special primary school/units and special units in Kitui County, Kenya. Kitui County is located in the Eastern side of Kenya bordering with Machakos, Embu and Tana River counties. Kitui County is located in the former Eastern Province of Kenya, about 160 km south east of Capital City Nairobi. It is one of the largest counties in the country covering an area of 30,496.5 square kilometers. Kitui shares its borders with seven counties; Tharaka and Meru to the north, Embu to the northwest, Machakos and Makueni to the west, Tana River to the east and southeast, and Taita Taveta to the south.
The Akamba iron-smiths who settled in Kitui town many years before the colonial period are the ones who named the area Kitui. The name *Kitui* means *a place where iron goods are made*. Kitui is accessible by road from Nairobi through Thika-Matuu road, about 110km; and from Nairobi through the 180km Nairobi-Machakos-Kitui road. One can also travel from Nairobi through Thika to Mwingi, about 210km.

Kitui County is mainly dry and hot with temperatures ranging between 14°C during the coldest months (July-August) and 34°C during the hottest months (January-March). The county receives between 500mm and 1050mm of rainfall annually, with average rainfall of 900mm a year. It has two rainy seasons; May-June (long rains) and September-October (short rains).

In economic activities; Agriculture in livestock rearing and subsistence farming is the backbone of the economy of Kitui County. In the highlands of Kitui, farmers are involved in subsistence agriculture - mainly growing cotton, tobacco, sisal, mangoes, maize, beans, cassava, sorghum, millet and pigeon peas. These crops are well adapted to the climatic conditions of the area. Crops produced are consumed locally with the surplus being sold to traders from Nairobi and neighboring towns. Kambas are also famous for their wood/soapstone carving and basket weaving skills as well as hunting.

In education sector; Kitui County has 1,189 primary special primary school/units, serving 317,667 primary school pupils and 298 secondary special primary school/units with 58388 secondary school students. The county’s Teacher to Pupil Ratio is 1:41 for public special primary school/units and 1:34 for public secondary special primary school/units. Institutions of higher education in the county include the South Eastern Kenya University (SEKU at Kwa Vonza), the University of Nairobi
(Kitui Campus at Multipurpose), Kenyatta University (Kitui Campus at Kwa Vonza), the Kitui Teacher Training College (KTTC-Kitui) the Kenya Medical Training College (KMTC-Kitui) and the Kenya water institute (KEWI-Kitui Campus in Kitui town).

In health sector: Kitui County has several hospitals and health centres to meet the health need of residents, among them Kitui General Hospital, Kitui Nursing Home, Neema Hospital, Jordan Hospital, mission-run hospitals such as Muthale Mission hospital and some private health centers.

3.4 Target Population

The population under study consisted of five public boarding special primary schools and twenty public special units in Kitui County. The population as at today is about 1422 Learners, 136 Teachers, and 92 Support Staff. The whole population cares and teaches children with special needs in special primary schools or special units in the county. From the study population, the researcher sampled out three special primary schools and three special units.

3.5 Sample and Sampling Procedures

Non-random purposive sampling technique was used to select the study participants. The researcher preferred this technique because in purposive sampling all the selected respondents are known to have some information which is of interest to the researcher and which could make the study successful (Orodho, 2010). The method enabled the researcher to get access to a particular subset of persons and not just any person but those with information of interest to the study. The method has a solid systematic
approach that would quickly lead to the main targets as it also saves time. Out of the whole population the researcher used three public special boarding primary schools. These are one public boarding special school for the deaf, one for the mentally handicapped and one integrated program for the blind. Three special units for the deaf/blind, autistic and physically handicapped learners also were used. These special primary schools and units represent all the special needs primary schools/units in Kitui County. They are in Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, and Central regions of the county as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Sampling Frame

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Special primary school/units</th>
<th>Special sample (n)</th>
<th>Teacher sample (N)</th>
<th>Support sample (N)</th>
<th>Learner sample (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically handicapped</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentally handicapped</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing impaired</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaf/blind</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autistic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.6 Research Instruments

A range of data collection methods were used to collect data with the aim of providing adequate responses on each of the various research questions. Questionnaires, Observation Checklist and an Interview Guide were used to collect data from the selected respondents during the field study period.
3.6.1 Questionnaires for Teachers, Learners, and Support Staff

The researcher constructed questionnaires for teachers, learners, and non-teaching staff. All the three questionnaires had two sections: The first section of the questionnaires sought to elicit personal details (Bio data) of the respondents. Section two of the three questionnaires sought to elicit data on the status of Safety in Special Primary School/Units in relation to overall performance of children with special needs in their basic education level. In all the three questionnaires closed-ended items were constructed to seek for consistency across responses from various sampled category of respondents.

Some closed-ended items were like; the 5-point likert rating scale questionnaire items were constructed by the researcher, comprising of five-response ratings of strongly agree-[1]; agree-[2]; not sure-[3]; disagree-[4] and strongly disagree-[5] or very satisfactory [1]; satisfactory [2]; not sure [3]; unsatisfactory [4]; very unsatisfactory [5] or very often [1]; often [2]; sometimes [3]; not often [4]; not at all [5]. Some open-ended items were also constructed to seek for freedom of responses from the variety of the respondents from their own opinion or views.

Advantages of using questionnaires: (i) Questionnaire was purposively used in this study because of its convenience in a survey research design where a lot of data is required for collection from a large and sparsely distributed sample of the study population. This study covered all special needs primary schools/units in the entire Kitui County. (ii) Questionnaires would also allow the respondents enough time to respond to each item at their own convenient time and not necessarily at the same time. (iii) Questionnaires are useful when time is inadequate, so they save time.
Disadvantages of using questionnaires: (i) One obstacle in using a questionnaire is the assumption that the expected respondents can read and write, and (ii) therefore it is assumed that all respondents can also understand the English language used in writing the questionnaires. (iii) However, under probabilistic sampling method some illiterate respondents may randomly be included in the sample. Because of their inability to read and write, this may lead to incompleteness of the questionnaire.

### 3.6.2 Interview Guide

The interview guide was constructed to collect data from the head teachers using one on one-face to face interviews with the researcher. The head teachers do implement the programme for children with special needs in the management of the special primary schools/units.

The interviews enabled the researcher to gather detailed information concerning physical safety in their special primary schools/units. According to Orodho, J.A (2010) Interview method was convenient because it allowed collection of detailed data. The researcher could also prompt for further information from the interviewees. One disadvantage noted when using interview method was time consuming; however, in this study, the sampled head teachers were few and the issue of time was not seen as a problem but rather an advantage to the researcher.

### 3.6.3 Observation Checklist

The researcher also constructed an observation checklist to evaluate the physical safety of the school infrastructure, fields, materials, and other resources in relation to safety measures put in place to care for children with special needs.
An observation checklist was used in the observation data collection method in the field study. This method was used because physical safety is something that can easily be observed. The researcher can gather more detailed data from the ground at the study area during observation. According to Orodho (2010), this method implies the collection of information by way of own investigation, observation, without interviewing the respondents. What is obtained is therefore the most current. However, the method cannot be used in collection of non-observable data or with large samples. Observation method can lead to interference with the responses due to presence of the researcher which can make the respondents change their behavior leading to unreliable data. This did not apply to this particular study since the observation was on physical facilities and not the respondents. This was an advantage.

3.7 Pilot study

Pilot study was conducted to authenticate the data collection tools in terms of establishing the validity and reliability of the research instruments. It is on the strength of the validity and reliability of data collection tools that the study results would be deemed generalizable. The aim of a pilot study is to ensure that research tools would gather expected data for the study to be successful.

To validate the instruments the researcher requested research experts to evaluate the qualitative items in each instrument to iron out he items that had double-meanings or ambiguities.

To establish the reliability of the instruments a test-retest technique was used to assess the questionnaire items repeatability and consistency in eliciting similar data after
repeated trials of administering the questionnaire to various samples from the same population with similar characteristics.

3.7.1 Validity

Validity is the degree to which the results obtained from the analysis of data actually represents the phenomenon under study. Orodho (2010) defined validity as a prior qualitative procedural test of the research instruments in attempting to ascertain whether they were accurate, correct, true, meaningful and right in eliciting the intended data for the study.

To establish the validity of the instruments the researcher requested research expert as well as practitioners in the field of educational research, her project research supervisors and lecturers from the school of education in Kenyatta University who are knowledgeable in the subject area and research methodology to proof read her questionnaires and interview guide items in order to advise her on the items that had double-meanings or ambiguities.

The expert opinion and feedback was used by the researcher to correct any anomalies after which the instruments were deemed valid and therefore, they were used in data collection for this study.

3.7.2 Reliability

To establish the reliability of the questionnaire, interview guide and observation schedule a test-retest technique was used by twice administering the instruments to a randomly selected sample of four (4) teachers, one (1) head teacher and ten (10) pupils in Central Primary School in Kitui Central District, Kitui County. The school
has an integrated program for the visually impaired children. This was done for the purpose of assessing the correlation of the type of responses expected from the field study from twice administering the research instruments to the same respondents within a two weeks time lapse in between. The second set of data was collected after two weeks from the same respondents by the researcher.

The two sets of data obtained were correlated using the Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation method. The correlation coefficients between the corresponding data points in the three instruments were calculated. The three correlation coefficients calculated were all found to be more than +0.8259, which was above +0.75 assumed to be high enough to ensure reliability of all the three study questionnaires (Orodho, 2010). Therefore the three instruments were deemed reliable and were assumed to replicate similar data after repeated trials on similar respondents. The instruments were therefore used for the data collection exercise in this study.

3.8 Data Collection Techniques

The researcher had obtained a research authorization permit from the County Director of Education (CDE) of Kitui County, prior to the field study period. The researcher pre-visited the selected special primary school/units to establish rapport with head teachers. During these familiarization pre-visits to each selected school, appointments for data collection dates were booked with the head teachers in advance.

During the data collection period: The researcher visited the selected special primary schools/units on different days and administered the three sets of questionnaires to the three selected sets of respondents, the teachers, support staff and learners. The respondents were given adequate time to fill in and return the questionnaires.
Meanwhile the researcher conducted interviews with the sampled head teachers through face to face interviews. Data on management of physical school environment in relation to safety of children with special needs were collected from the selected head teachers by the researcher.

In addition, the researcher obtained permission from each of the head teachers for touring the school compound, with the purpose of making observations on infrastructure, fields, materials, and other physical resources to evaluate their status of special primary schools/units physical safety in relation to physical safety of children with special needs. The researcher made observations focused on the status of special primary schools/units physical safety of the school infrastructure, fields, materials, and other resources in relation to physical safety of children with special needs.

3.9 Data Analysis Plan

Descriptive data analysis with both quantitative and qualitative approach was used to analyze the data obtained from the field study. During data analysis, data were checked for completeness and errors. Descriptive data analysis involved calculation of percentages and mean-values. A theoretical mean value of 3.0 was determined using the formula \((1+2+3+4+5)/5 = 15/5 = 3.0\) as the criterion to judge the mean values of all the 5-point likert rating items in this study.

Therefore, any item with a mean equal to or more than 3.5 was taken to indicate that the opinion of the respondents was in disagreement with the statement rated. Any of the questionnaire items with a mean less than 3.499 but above 2.5 was indicating that the opinion of the respondents was that of not sure or neutral or uncertain or undecided with the statement rated. Any item with a mean less than 2.499 was judged
as to indicate that the opinion of the respondents was in agreement with the statement rated. Quantitative data was presented in frequency distribution tables preceded by explanations. The qualitative data was analyzed using categorization of data into related themes of interest to the study in accordance to the research objectives. This results were transcribed, categorized thematically and presented as narrations from the respondents’ verbatim and quotations.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

In order to maintain the expected standards of public relations and ethics; the following major ethical issues were addressed by the researcher during the field study: Informed consent for participation, the assurance of the respondents’ anonymity and the researcher’s responsibility in ethically upholding privacy and confidentiality.

The researcher had obtained the Research Authorization Permit from the County Director of Education (CDE)-Kitui County, prior to the field study period. This permit acted as a written consent from the ministry of education to allow the study to be conducted and it was shown to each of the participants before they were interviewed. Informed consent for participation in this study was sought before administering the questionnaire or interviewing any of the selected respondents.

In the assurance that the study results were going to be used for the intended purpose only, the respondents were assured of confidentiality of the information they gave in order to uphold their privacy. All participants were asked not to write their names or initials or even indicating any symbol on the questionnaire that could disclose their identity. This helped in ensuring that their identity remained anonymous.
CHAPTER FOUR
DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction
This chapter consists of data presentation, analysis and interpretation. The chapter has been arranged according to the objectives of the study. The analyzed data has been presented by use of frequency distribution tables. Open ended questions were analyzed by grouping similar responses and the tally system used to generate frequency tables. Description of the findings has been given to clarify the results on the tables.

4.1.1 Study Response Rate
Responses were received from all the 6 head teachers, 60 teachers 56 support staff and 75 children with special needs from the 6 sampled special primary school/units in Kitui County. Therefore the overall interview response and questionnaire return rate stood at 100% which was an excellent response rate.

4.2 Personal Details of the Selected Respondents
4.2.1 Bio data of Children with Special Needs
In item one the children with special needs were asked to indicate their gender. According to study results there almost fifty-fifty gender participation because there were 50.7 percent male children with special needs and 49.3 percent female children with special needs who participated in this study. In item two, the pupils were asked to indicate their age in years in the range of from 10-13 years; between 14-18 years;
between 19-22 years and more than 22 years old as shown in Table 4.1; which shows
distribution of selected children with special needs by age in years.

Table 4.1 Distribution of Children with Special Needs by Age in Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age in Years</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between 10-13 years</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 14-18 years</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 19-22 years</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>46.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 22 years</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 4.1: majority (70.7 percent) of the selected children with special needs
were aged between 19-22 years and more than 22 years: Where 46.7 percent of the
selected children with special needs were aged between 19-22 years and 24 percent of the
selected children with special needs were aged more than 22 years. A few (29.3 percent)
of the selected children with special needs were aged between 10-18 years old: Where
17.3 percent of the selected children with special needs were aged between 14-18 years
and 12 percent of the selected children with special needs were aged between 10-13 years
old. The implication of these results is that most of the children with special needs
spend more time in their primary school education than their counterparts in the
mainstream regular primary school education system. The pupils in the mainstream
regular primary special primary school/units usually complete their primary education
when their age is in the range of between 13-14 years old.

This could be attributed to language development by the two groups. It may be argued
that late identification and placement of special needs children simply leaves
insufficient time to address language needs of the learners. It is possible that the influence of age of identification of a child determines the age of school completion (Moeller, M.P 2000).

4.2.2 Personal Details of Teachers/Support Staff

In item one the teachers and support staff were asked to indicate their gender. The results showed that the female support staff/teachers 63.8 percent were compared to their male counterparts who constituted 36.2 percent of the total study sample of teachers and support staff. Although gender was insignificant in affecting the status of special primary schools/units physical safety of the children with special needs. More female teachers and support staff than their male counterparts participated in the study. In item two, the support staff/teachers were asked to indicate their working experience in years. The results were as shown in Table 4.2, which shows distribution of teachers/ support staff by experience in years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience in Years</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1 year</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 1-5 years</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 6-10 years</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 11-15 years</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>54.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 16-20 years</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 20 years</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to results in Table 4.2, majority (84.5 percent) of the selected special school teachers and support staff had their working experience ranging between 6-20 years: Slightly over 54 percent of the selected special school teachers and support staff had their working experience ranging between 11-15 years; 20.7 percent of the selected special school teachers and support staff had their working experience ranging between 16-20 years and 9.5 percent of the selected special school teachers and support staff had their working experience ranging between 6-10 years. A few (15.5 percent) of the selected special school teachers and support staff had their working experience ranging between less than 1 year; between 1-5 years and more than 20 years: Where 6.9 percent of the selected special school teachers and support staff had their working experience of more than 20 years; 6.0 percent of the selected special school teachers and support staff had their working experience ranging between 1-5 years and 2.6 percent of the selected special school teachers and support staff had a working experience of less than 1 year in the special needs special primary school/units in Kitui County.

According to this study special teacher turn over in Kitui is low as compared to other institutions. This could be attributed to the low numbers of teachers specialized in special education. A review of research regarding the chronic shortage of special education teachers in the United States of America concurs with the findings of this study (Fish & Stephens, 2010). There is a critical shortage of special education teachers in the United States. This shortage is chronic and severe and exists in every geographical region of the nation.
4.2.3 Personal Details of Head Teachers

In item one of the interview guide the sampled head teachers were asked to indicate their gender. The results indicated that there was double (66.7 percent) female representation than male representation (33.3 percent) among the special needs school head teachers. The head teachers were asked to say their highest level of special education training. The study findings from the analysis of the interview responses were tabulated as shown in Table 4.3, which shows distribution of head teachers’ by level of special education achieved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Special Education Level Achieved</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certificate in special education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma in special education</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelors Degree in special education</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters Degree in special education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD Degree in special education</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the results illustrated in Table 4.3: Majority (66.6 percent) of the head teachers had a diploma in special education and a bachelor’s degree in special education: Where 33.3 percent of the head teachers had attained diploma in special education and 33.3 percent of the head teachers had attained a bachelor’s degree qualifications in special education.
A few (33.4 percent) of the selected head teachers had attained a certificate in special education and master’s degree in special education: Where 16.7 percent of the selected head teachers had attained a certificate in special education and 16.7 percent of the selected head teachers had attained a master’s degree in special education. None of the selected head teachers had attained a PhD degree in special education. However, level of special education attained was insignificant in relation to the physical safety of the children with special needs among the selected head teachers.

In ‘question three’ the head teachers were asked to say their headship experience in years. The study findings from the analysis of the interview responses were tabulated as shown in Table 4.4, which shows the sampled special needs school head teachers’ distribution by experience in years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience in Years</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1 year</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 1-5 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 6-10 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 11-15 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 16-20 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 20 years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results illustrated in Table 4.4, shows that majority (66.6 percent) of the selected special school’s head teachers had their experience in headship ranging between 6-15 years: Where (33.3 percent) of the selected head teachers had their experience in
headship ranging between 6-10 years and (33.3 percent) of the selected head teachers had their experience in headship ranging between 11-15 years.

A few (33.3 percent) of the selected head teachers for the study had their experience in headship ranging between 1-5 years and between 16-20 years, where 16.7 percent of the selected head teachers had their experience in headship ranging between 1-5 years, while the other 16.7 percent of the selected head teachers had their experience in headship ranging between 16-20 years. None of the head teachers had less than 1 year or more than 20 years of experience in special needs school headship.

This implied that a good number was found qualified enough to implement safety standards and guidelines in their schools as well as government policies if well facilitated.

4.3 Status of Special Primary Schools/Units Physical Safety

To answer the research question one of the study that sought the responses on the current physical safety in relation to children with special needs in the selected Special Primary Schools/units, the head teachers were asked to say if their special primary schools/units had any special needs designed toilets/pit latrines that were in use in their special primary schools/units. The findings from their responses were as shown in Figure 4.1, which shows percentage head teachers’ responses distribution by presence or absence of specially designed toilets/pit latrines in the selected special primary schools/units in Kitui County.
Figure 4.1 Head teachers’ Responses on Presence or Absence of Special Designed Toilets

According to the study results shown in Figure 4.1; majority (83.3 percent) of the sampled head teachers indicated that their special primary school/units had no specially designed toilets/pit latrines and only a few 16.7 percent of the sampled head teachers had indicated that their special primary school/units had only one specially designed toilet/pit latrine for children with special needs. The head teachers were also asked to say if there were mobile toilet chairs for the children with special needs pupils in their special primary school/units. From the responses received all (100 percent) of the sampled head teachers had no mobile toilet chairs for the children with special needs with physical challenges in their special primary schools/units. There being no mobile toilet chairs for the children with special needs pupils in selected special primary school/units which hardly had specially designed toilets/pit latrines for the children with special needs including physically challenged children was interpreted as to show inadequacy in physical safety of these learners while in school.

In items (3-12) of the teachers/support staff questionnaire, they were asked to use the 5-point likert rating scale (Strongly Agree SA = 1, Agree A= 2, Neutral N = 3 Disagree D = 4 Strongly Disagree SD = 5) to rate the status of special primary
schools/units physical safety in relation to children with special needs in their special primary schools/units. Ten (10) indicators of status of special primary schools/units physical safety were used in the rating as shown in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5 Status of Special Primary Schools/Units Safety by Teachers/Support Staff**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status of Special Primary Schools/Units</th>
<th>Physical Safety for Children with Special Needs</th>
<th>SA=1</th>
<th>A=2</th>
<th>N=3</th>
<th>D=4</th>
<th>SD=5</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School is safe and well maintained</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>4.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working fire extinguishers present</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security guards trained on safety</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strangers allowed after are identified</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children with special needs to relatives</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All people in school first aid knowhow</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>4.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>44.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe lamps and floors in the classrooms</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>4.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical wires covered/routine check</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>4.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition of toilets/dormitories is safe</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>3.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe water/food are used in school</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As shown in Table 4.5; majority (75.9 percent) of the selected teachers/support staff disagreed with the fact that the school environments were safe and well maintained to ensure safety in relation to the status of special primary schools/units physical safety for the children with special needs in Kitui County. Accordingly the mean value calculated was \[ \frac{(4 \times 1) + (11 \times 2) + (13 \times 3) + (32 \times 4) + (56 \times 5)}{116} = \frac{489}{116} = 4.22. \]

Therefore, since the mean value was more than 3.5 it indicated that the teachers/support staff disagreed with the fact that the special primary schools/units were safe and well maintained in relation to status of special primary schools/units physical safety for children with special needs in Kitui County.

According to the study results illustrated as shown in Table 4.5; slightly above half (56.0 percent) of the selected teachers/support staff disagreed with the fact that working fire extinguishers were present in their special primary schools/units in relation to status of special primary schools/units physical safety for the children with special needs in Kitui County. However, the mean value calculated was \[ \frac{(11 \times 1) + (19 \times 2) + (21 \times 3) + (33 \times 4) + (32 \times 5)}{116} = \frac{404}{116} = 3.48. \]

Therefore, since the mean value was less than 3.5 but more than 2.5 it indicated that the teachers/support staff were not sure with the fact that working fire extinguishers were present in their special primary schools/units in relation to status of special primary schools/units physical safety for the children with special needs in Kitui County.

As shown in Table 4.5; many (68.1 percent) of the selected teachers/support staff disagreed with the fact that all the special primary schools/units security guards were trained on safety precautions in relation to status of special primary schools/units physical safety for the children with special needs in Kitui County. Accordingly; the
The mean value calculated was 
\[
\frac{(5\times1)+(9\times2)+(23\times3)+(34\times4)+(45\times5)}{116} = \frac{453}{116} = 3.91.
\]

Therefore, since the mean value was more than 3.5 it indicated that the teachers/support staff disagreed with the fact that all the special primary schools/units security guards were trained on safety precautions in relation to status of special primary schools/units physical safety for the children with special needs in Kitui County.

According to the study results illustrated as shown in Table 4.5; neither side of the selected teachers/support staff either agreed or disagreed, therefore they were all not sure with the fact that strangers were only allowed to enter the school after identification in relation to status of special primary schools/units physical safety for the children with special needs in Kitui County. The mean value calculated afterwards as 
\[
\frac{(16\times1)+(26\times2)+(32\times3)+(19\times4)+(23\times5)}{116} = \frac{345}{116} = 2.97
\]

it was clear that the mean was less than 3.5 but more than 2.5, which indicated that the teachers/support staff were not sure with the fact that strangers were only allowed to enter the school after identification in relation to status of special primary schools/units physical safety for the children with special needs in Kitui County.

According to the study results illustrated as shown in Table 4.5; neither side of the selected teachers/support staff either agreed or disagreed, therefore they were all not sure with the fact that children with special needs were only given to their relatives from their special primary schools/units in relation to status of special primary schools/units physical safety for the children with special needs in Kitui County. Going by the mean value calculated afterwards as 
\[
\frac{(17\times1)+(24\times2)+(25\times3)+(32\times4)+(19\times5)}{116} = \frac{363}{116} = 3.13
\]

it was clear that the mean value calculated was
less than 3.5 but more than 2.5 it indicated that the teachers/support staff were not sure with the fact that children with special needs were only given to their relatives from their special primary schools/units in relation to status of special primary schools/units physical safety for the children with special needs in Kitui County.

As shown in Table 4.5; majority (80.2 percent) of the selected teachers/support staff disagreed with the fact that all people in the special primary schools/units had adequate first aid knowledge for safety in relation to status of special primary schools/units physical safety for the children with special needs in Kitui County. Accordingly; the mean value calculated was \[
\frac{(3\times1)+(7\times2)+(13\times3)+(41\times4)+(52\times5)}{116} = \frac{480}{116} = 4.14.
\]
Therefore, since the mean value was more than 3.5, it indicated that the teachers/support staff disagreed with the fact that all people in the special primary schools/units had adequate first aid knowledge for safety in relation to status of physical safety for the children with special needs in Kitui County.

As shown in Table 4.5; majority (78.5 percent) of the selected teachers/support staff disagreed with the fact that the school lamps and floors were safe and well maintained in relation to status of special primary schools/units physical safety for the children with special needs in Kitui County.

Accordingly; the mean value calculated was \[
\frac{(6\times1)+(9\times2)+(11\times3)+(42\times4)+(49\times5)}{116} = \frac{470}{116} = 4.05.
\]
Therefore, since the mean value was more than 3.5, it indicated that the teachers/support staff disagreed with the fact that school lamps and floors were safe and well maintained in relation to status of special primary schools/units physical safety for the children with special needs in Kitui County. As shown in Table 4.5;
many (68.1 percent) of the selected teachers/support staff disagreed with the fact that the electrical wires were well covered and routinely serviced to avoid accidents in relation to status of special primary schools/units physical safety for the children with special needs in Kitui County. Accordingly; the mean value calculated was 
\[
\frac{(9 \times 1) + (10 \times 2) + (18 \times 3) + (34 \times 4) + (45 \times 5)}{116} = \frac{444}{116} = 3.83.
\]
Therefore, since the mean value was more than 3.5, it indicated that the teachers/support staff disagreed with the fact that the electrical wires were well covered and routinely serviced to avoid accidents in relation to status of special primary schools/units physical safety for the children with special needs in Kitui County.

As shown in Table 4.5; majority (85.4 percent) of the selected teachers/support staff disagreed with the fact that the conditions of toilets and dormitories in the special primary school/units were safe in relation to status of special primary school/units physical safety for the children with special needs in Kitui County. Accordingly; the mean value calculated was 
\[
\frac{(4 \times 1) + (4 \times 2) + (9 \times 3) + (45 \times 4) + (54 \times 5)}{116} = \frac{489}{116} = 4.22.
\]
Therefore, since the mean value was more than 3.5 it indicated that the teachers/support staff disagreed with the fact that the conditions of toilets and dormitories in the special primary schools/units were safe in relation to status of special primary schools/units physical safety for the children with special needs in Kitui County.

As shown in Table 4.5; majority (77.6 percent) of the selected teachers/support staff agreed with the fact that in the special primary schools/units safe water/food were used in relation to status of special primary schools/units physical safety for the children with special needs in Kitui County. According to calculated mean value
[(54×1)+(36×2)+(16×3)+(10×4)+(0×5)]/116 = 214/116 = 1.84, the teachers/support staff agreed with the fact that in the special primary schools/units safe water/food were used in relation to status of special primary schools/units physical safety for the children with special needs in Kitui County.

Therefore, the implications of the findings above were that the status of special primary schools/units physical safety in relation to children with special needs in the selected special primary schools/units was wanting. The findings supported the fact that there were threats to physical safety in relation to the children with special needs in Kitui County. In as far as adequacy of the status of special primary schools/units physical safety was concerned; going by the analysis of the ten 10 indicators of status of special primary schools/units physical safety in the selected special primary schools/units, which were used in the rating as shown in Table 4.5, the general interpretation of the teachers/support staff opinion on the status of special primary schools/units physical safety was that the status of physical safety in the selected special primary school/units in Kitui county was inadequate. The inadequacy of the safety for the children with special needs led to the current safety threats in the selected special primary schools/units in the county.

Kirui et al (2011) found out that a total of 63% head teachers reported having experienced security problems in their schools in Kisii County. The result is similar to that of security guards who reported to have security challenges in schools they were guarding from the same region. The study further revealed that most widespread effect of insecurity was incurring additional cost for maintaining security, (64%) emotional and physical safety, learners (61.5%) among others.
The safe school safety report conducted in USA in 1978 came up with shocking statistics regarding insecurity in schools. This report indicated that approximately 282,000 learners and 5,200 educators were physically assaulted in American schools every month (Eliot, Hamburg and Williams, 1998) A comparative study of member states of European union found out that the rate of insecurity in schools had risen sharply in the past two decade by as much as 50-100% (Hughes, 2004).

4.4 Threats to Status of Special Primary Schools/Units physical safety

On the current safety threats in the school the pupils were asked to indicate the most common accidents that do occur to learners in their special primary schools/units from falls; poisoning; drowning; burns; and others to specify. The results after data analysis were tabulated as shown in Table 4.6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequent Accidents</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Falls</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>56.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poisoning</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drowning</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burns</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>34.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>75</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to study results shown in Table 4.6, majority (90.7 percent) of the sampled children with special needs were in agreement with the fact that their safety threats were accidents like falls and burns on the children with special needs: Where (56.0 percent) of the study sample of the special educational need pupils had indicated that
there were falls and 34.7 percent of the study sample of the special educational need pupils had indicated that there were burns on the children with special needs in the selected special primary school/units in Kitui County.

Accidents as a result of falls were mainly caused by stairs where children missed a step and rolled on the stairs. Others were from unsecured double-decker beds and uneven play grounds.

Accidents from burns were mainly caused by kerosene lambs, stoves and hot food like porridge and tea whereby children accidentally knocked the containers spilling on to the others.

The above study findings interpreted as to indicate the fact that there were threats to safety of the children with special needs in the selected special primary schools/units in Kitui County. These findings concur with Omolo t al (2010) Kirui et al (2011) and Nderitu (2009) that fire is a type of disaster in public schools. This raises serious doubts about safety preparedness in public special schools.

In ‘question four’ the head teachers were asked to say the average number of pupils per class in their special primary schools/units. The study findings from the analysis of the interview responses were tabulated as shown in Table 4.7, which shows the distribution of head teachers’ responses on the average number of pupils per class level in the selected special primary schools/units in Kitui County.
### Table 4.7 Distribution of Head Teachers by Average Number of Pupils per Class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience in Years</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 5 pupils</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 5-9 pupils</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 10-14 pupils</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 15-19 pupils</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 20 pupils</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the study findings shown in Table 4.7, many (66.7 percent) of the selected head teachers agreed that their special primary schools/units were on average understaffed because they had more than the recommended pupils in their classrooms. The (66.7 percent) of head teachers indicated having more than 15 pupils per class; where 50 percent of the selected head teachers had between 15-19 pupils per class and 16.7 percent of the selected head teachers had more than 20 pupils per class. The other 33.3 percent of the selected head teachers had between 10-14 children with special needs per class in Kitui County.

The implications of the findings above were that the normal classrooms were overcrowded with the children with special needs in the selected special primary schools/units. The findings supported the fact that there were threats to physical safety in relation to the children with special needs in Kitui County in as far as adequacy of the learning space in their classrooms were concerned.
The study findings concur with statistical findings in Europe (Hughes, 2004) which indicated a high level of insecurity in schools. Kenyan education system is not yet responsive to the standardised safety requirements for children with special needs. Common standards of risk and harm that could advance policy and practice are lacking not only in Kitui but in most parts of the country. Kirui et al (2011) concurs with this finding.

In item 10 of the selected children with special needs questionnaire, they were asked to use the 5-point scale given as: Very satisfactory [1]; Satisfactory [2]; Not sure [3]; Unsatisfactory [4]; Very unsatisfactory [5] to rate the school status of special primary school/units physical safety in relation to safety threats on the children with special needs. The findings were as shown in Table 4.8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating Scores (x:1-5)</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>x</th>
<th>fx</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-Very satisfactory</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Satisfactory</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-Not sure</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4- Unsatisfactory</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>34.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-Very unsatisfactory</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>52.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>75</strong></td>
<td><strong>326</strong></td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 4.8, majority (86.6 percent) of the sampled children with special needs were in agreement with the fact that their safety was threatened: Where (52.0 percent) of the study sample of the special educational need pupils had indicated that
their safety was very unsatisfactory and (34.7 percent) of the study sample of the special educational need pupils had indicated that their safety was unsatisfactory. This was interpreted as to indicate the fact that there were threats to safety of the children with special needs in the selected special primary schools/units.

There was only a small percentage (4.0 percent) of the sampled children with special needs who had concurred with the fact that there were no safety threats in the selected special primary school/units. Some other few (9.3 percent) children with special needs were not sure on how to rate the safety threats in relation to physical safety of the children with special needs in the selected special primary schools/units. This was interpreted as to indicate the fact that the threats to safety in relation to the safety of the children with special needs was so unsatisfactory that some of them never bothered to rate it. Therefore, the children with special needs attitude to their safety in the selected special primary schools/units were negative.

Threats to school safety as indicated in the MOE safety standards manual (Republic of Kenya, 2008) can emanate internally within the school environment or externally from within the wide community. Key among the threats to special schools and units’ safety are accidents caused by carelessness, inattentiveness, ignorance, irresponsibility or negligence on the part of the learners, staff or other stakeholders in general. It is in this context that the study observed special schools/units and found that they were not disability compliant for example, there were no ramps, had stairs, pot holes in the fields and the environments were not friendly.
To calculate the mean value of \( x \), the total frequencies (\( f \)) according to the rater scale were calculated and presented (\( \sum f = 75 \)). The sum of the product (\( f \)) and (\( x \)) was calculated to get (\( \sum fx = 326 \)), then (\( \sum fx \)) was divided by (\( \sum f \)) to obtain the mean as \( \frac{\sum fx}{\sum f} = \frac{326}{75} = 4.35 \). The fact that the calculated mean was higher than the hypothetical mean value of 3.0 indicated that the selected study learners were in agreement that there were more of the threats to their safety in the selected special primary schools/units than was their safety against injuries. This was an indication that the status of special primary schools/units physical safety in the selected special primary schools/units for the children with special needs was unsatisfactory and therefore inadequate. Therefore, there were threats to safety of the children with special needs in the selected special primary schools/units.

On the current safety threats in their special primary schools/units, the head teachers were asked to say if the government was doing enough to ensure physical safety for children with special needs in the selected special primary schools/units. In their responses, majority (83.3 percent) of the sampled head teachers had indicated (No) to say that the government was not doing enough to ensure physical safety for children with special needs in the selected special primary schools/units in Kitui County. Only a few (16.7 percent) of the sampled head teachers had indicated (Yes) to say that the government was doing enough to ensure physical safety in relation to safety of children with special needs in the study sampled selected special primary schools/units. This was interpreted as it was evident that the government was not doing enough to ensure physical safety for children with special needs in the selected special primary schools/units in Kitui County.
The study findings interpreted indicate the fact that there were threats to safety of the children with special needs in the selected special primary schools/units in Kitui County. These findings concur with the earlier reviewed literature where, the Kenyan education system is not yet responsive to the standardised safety requirements for children with special needs (GOK, 2012).

4.5 Learners' Attitude towards the Status of Special Primary Schools/Units Safety

To answer the research question which sought to unravel the children with special needs' attitude towards their safety in special primary schools/units the selected children with special needs were asked to use the 5-point scale that was given as: Very satisfactory [1]; Satisfactory [2]; Not sure [3]; Unsatisfactory [4]; Very unsatisfactory [5], to rate how they liked or disliked the status of special primary schools/units physical safety of the electrical wires/lamps and floors in their classrooms in relation to physical safety of children with special needs. The findings were presented as shown in Table 4.9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating Scores (x: 1-5)</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>x</th>
<th>fx</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-Very satisfactory</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Satisfactory</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-Not sure</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4- Unsatisfactory</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-Very unsatisfactory</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
<td>332</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As shown in Table 4.9, majority (89.3 percent) of the sampled children with special needs were in agreement with the fact that their safety was unsatisfactory in terms of classrooms’ status of electrical wires, lamps and floors: 53.3 percent of special education needs pupils had indicated that their safety was very unsatisfactory in terms of classrooms’ status of electrical wires/lamps and floors. In addition, 36.0 percent of the special education needs pupils indicated that their safety was unsatisfactory in terms of classrooms’ status of electrical wires/lamps and floors. This was interpreted as to indicate the fact that there were negative learners’ attitudes towards the safety of the children with special needs in the selected special primary schools/units in Kitui County.

To calculate the mean value of x, the total frequencies (f) according to the rater scale were calculated and presented (∑f) = 75. The sum of the product (f) and (x) was calculated to get (∑fx) = 332, then (∑fx) was divided by (∑f) to obtain the mean as ∑fx/∑f= 332/75 = (4.43). The fact that the calculated mean was higher than the hypothetical mean value of 3.0 indicated that the study participants indicated that there was negative attitude of children with special needs towards their safety in terms of classrooms’ status of special primary schools/units physical safety of electrical wires/lamps and floors in relation to safety of children with special needs in the selected special primary schools/units in Kitui County.

The implications of the above study findings; were interpreted as to indicate the fact that there were threats to safety of the children with special needs in the selected special primary schools/units in Kitui County. The findings of this concur with earlier
reviewed literature where, the Kenyan education system is not yet responsive to the standardised safety requirements for children with special needs (GOK, 2012).

According to Montee (2008) school children in the United States of America (USA) are faced with a variety of school safety issues. They also lack funding to purchase equipment and security services needed just like in Kenya. Schools in USA also are said not to conduct safety drills for many types of hazards.

The safe school study report conducted in USA in 1978 came up with shocking statistics regarding insecurity in schools. This report indicated that approximately 282,000 learners and 5,200 educators were physically assaulted in American schools every month (Eliot, Hamburg and Williams, 1998).

4.6 Challenges in Maintenance of Physical Safety

To answer the research question two of the study, which sought to unravel the extent to which there were special school managerial challenges in relation to children with special needs’ physical safety, the pupils were asked some common Yes or No response questions to infer the managerial challenges facing special primary school/units in provision of good status of special primary schools/units physical safety for children with special needs as follows: The results after analysis were as shown in Table 4.10, which shows the managerial challenges in relation to children with special needs’ physical safety.
Table 4.10 Challenges in Maintenance of Physical Safety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Safety Managerial Challenges</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No (f)</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Difference %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are there specially designed toilets in school</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>-68.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you get specially safe food in school</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>92.0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>+84.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you get specially safe water in school</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>+49.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you assured of physical safety in school</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>90.3</td>
<td>-79.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do teachers listen to your safety complaints</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>-28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Percentage Differences between Yes (to agree with)/No (to disagree with)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-42.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 4.10, majority 42.2 percentage differences towards (No) of the sampled children with special needs were in agreement with the fact that there were challenges in maintenance of status of special primary schools/units physical safety in Kitui County, because their responses showed that there were shortages of safety facilities in their special primary schools/units. The implications of the above study findings were that the special needs school management was facing certain challenges in its role of provision and maintenance of physical safety within the selected special primary schools/units in Kitui County.

This indicated that there were threats to safety of the children with special needs in the selected special primary schools/units in the County. The aforementioned study findings concur with the earlier reviewed literature where, the Kenyan education system is not yet responsive to the standardised safety requirements for children with special needs. Nderitu C, (2009) in his thesis on implementation of safety guidelines
in Githunguri Division, Kenya concurs with this study. Omolo et al (2010) also concurs with the findings as well.

4.7 Strategies for Improving Status of Special Primary Schools/Units physical safety

To answer the research question five which sought for strategies of improving physical safety for the children with special needs while in the special school compounds; the head teachers were asked to rate how often the Ministry of Education officials visited the special primary school/units to evaluate adherence to safety regulations. After data analysis, the results were tabulated as shown in Table 4.11, which shows the level of the Ministry of Education officials’ visits to the special primary schools/units to evaluate adherence to safety regulations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating Scores (x:I-5)</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>x</th>
<th>Fx</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-Very often</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Often</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-Sometimes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-Not often</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-Not at all</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 4.11, majority (83.3 percent) of the sampled head teachers disagreed with the fact that the Ministry of Education officials often visited their special primary school/units to evaluate adherence to safety regulations in Kitui.
County. Therefore rarely did the Ministry of Education officials visit the selected special primary schools/units for evaluation of adherence to children with special needs’ safety regulations in Kitui County.

Only a few (16.7 percent) of the sampled head teachers were not sure on the fact that the Ministry of Education officials often visited their special primary schools/units to evaluate adherence to safety regulations in Kitui County. However, this was interpreted to have indication that some of these head teachers had no evidence of ever any Ministry of Education officials coming to their special primary schools/units for evaluation of adherence to children with special needs’ safety regulations in Kitui County.

To calculate the average value also called the mean value of x, the total frequencies (f) according to the rater scale were calculated and presented ($\sum f$), where $\sum$ stands for 'sum of' The sum of the product (f) and (x) was calculated to get ($\sum fx$). The ($\sum fx$) value was divided by ($\sum f$) value to obtain the mean within the 5-point scale rating. The mean value was calculated as $\sum fx/\sum f = 26/6 = (4.33)$. The fact that the mean was higher than the hypothetical mean value of 3.0 indicated that the study participants disagreed with the fact that the Ministry of Education officials often visited their special primary school/units to evaluate adherence to safety regulations in Kitui County.

In item 8, the head teachers were finally asked to suggest what should be done to improve the physical safety in relation to safety of children with special needs in their special primary schools/units. The head teachers suggested that adherence to safety regulations in relation to physical needs safety in Kitui County was important to
enhance improvement in the safety precautions for the safety of the children with special needs while in the selected special primary schools/units.

In item 13, support staff/teachers were finally asked to indicate the changes they would make to improve the physical safety for children with special needs in their special primary schools/units given an opportunity. The teachers/support staff suggested that adherence to safety regulations in relation to physical needs safety in Kitui County was important to enhance improvement in the safety precautions for the safety of the children with special needs while in the selected special primary schools/units.

In item 11, the selected children with special needs were asked to suggest some changes to improve the physical safety in their special primary schools/units. The selected learners suggested that adherence to safety regulations in relation to physical needs safety in Kitui County was important to enhance improvement in the safety precautions for the safety of the children with special needs while in the selected special primary schools/units.

The study findings interpreted indicate the fact that there were threats to safety in regard to safety of the children with special needs. Therefore, the study findings concurred with the earlier reviewed literature where it was found imperative for the government in collaboration with all stakeholders in the provision of and maintenance of special education were required to consult and come up with a working safety precautionary policy framework in Kenya (GOK, 2012). Such a policy framework would ensure minimisation of safety threats in the selected special primary schools/units. Hence it would enhance status of special primary schools/units
physical safety in relation to children with special needs among the selected special primary schools/units both in Kitui County, in Kenya and elsewhere in the developing countries like Kenya.

The study findings were also in line with (wills & Jackson 2000) where Kenya was advised to learn lessons from the ICP in England and Wales with the aim of raising the standard of educational achievement for all pupils with special needs, thus, ensuring that all pupils have access to similar syllabus content and or in the mainstream school environment within the inclusive education policy. (Konza, D. 2008)

According to the report by the Task Force on Realignment of Kenyan education system with the Constitution of Kenya (2010), and with the achievement of Kenya’s development blue print commonly called Vision 2030: The Kenyan education system is not yet responsive to the standardised safety requirements for children with special needs (GOK, 2012). According to the report; most subject areas of the 8-4-4 primary school education curriculum need to be adapted to special needs requirements and some areas may also be prepared afresh to avoid shutting out children with special needs from enjoying the inclusive education programme with their regular primary school counterparts (GOK, 2012).

The researcher concludes that, in an inclusive education policy, all learners including the children with special needs would feel accepted and valued in school regardless of their general physical challenges either at mild or moderate levels in addition to all their physical safety needs being addressed simultaneously. Therefore, the special primary schools/units for visually and hearing impaired pupils; special primary

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schools/units for pupils who are children with special needs and the special primary
schools/units for pupils who are emotionally disturbed would not be useful since such
special primary schools/units encourage discrimination of pupils on the grounds of
their natural physical abilities and/or disabilities.

Most of the above mentioned statistical data indicates that the implementation of
school safety policies are neglected in many schools in Kitui County. The data also
indicates, despite the schools having standard safety manuals given by the
government for use, many schools have not adhered to the manual. This means that
the specifications on safety are only available on paper. This enhances the liability to
be accountable for injuries of school pupils or any other person on the school
premises.

School governing bodies and school managements neglect their responsibility to
implement school safety and security legislation, policies and other departmental
guidelines, especially on physical safety in special schools/units for example, safety
representatives are not elected, safety plans is not operational, fire drills and
evacuations are not practiced, safe floors and ramps are not put in place and the
grounds are not levelled. The findings also suggest that schools are in possession of
safety manuals, but they do not utilise it. All the above mentioned is an indication that
safety and security is not a priority in special schools/units and every thing possible
should be done to encourage governance and management teams to implement
policies. In fact, Hester (2003) emphasises that effective policies protect learners,
educators and non- teaching staff from both internal and external threats. It is for
these reasons that she highlighted policy matters such as building security, building
emergency response teams, safe evacuation and annual school safety training for students and staff. In addition, the centre for the study of violence and Reconciliation (2000) advocates the importance of institutional matters such as functional safety plans and safety teams. They recommended the following stakeholders to be on the safety team. The principal, a member of the school Governing body, educators trained in trauma management two learners, a parent, a person in the school administration, a police representative and a member from the community. The same could be applied in Kenya to alleviate the current safety issues in schools.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the study, findings and recommendations of the study and highlights suggestions for further studies in relation to the physical safety of children with special needs in special primary schools/units.

5.2 Summary of the Study

A person becomes one with children with special needs when his or her capacity to participate in and benefit from regular mainstream education is restricted due to an enduring physical, sensory, mental, health or learning disability. Education for children with special needs may be provided in mainstream regular school in special classes or in purely selected schools. All learners including children needs have a constitutional right to free primary education. Therefore, the children with special needs have the right to free primary education in Kenya (GOK, 2012)

On the current school physical safety in special needs primary schools in relation to children with special needs in Kitui County was established to have impacted negatively on understaffing of special needs schools for children with special needs. Status of school physical safety can impact positively or negatively in the education of children with special needs. On threats to physical safety, the children with special needs continue to face obstacles to learning, safety needs being one of the major obstacles they are facing. Safety within the school is assumed by many, but it is perhaps a less understood determinant to participation in basic education for children with special needs. The unsafe status might be one of the reasons as to why many
learners with special needs might have refused to enroll for their primary school education. The study findings attest to the fact that most of the Kenyan special needs primary schools are mainly unsafe places for children with special needs. The reported unsafe instances among the selected special needs primary schools in Kitui County seemed to have presented a picture of schools which are physically unsafe to learners with special needs in the entire country, Kenya.

Some of the threats to physical safety in the selected schools were established to have impacted negatively on both the enrollment and performance of children with special needs in Kitui County. Most of the selected schools’ safety -threatening instances was found to occur during the day or even at night in the special boarding schools. In this study, the researcher investigated the status of school physical safety and security features of the special schools physical environment as well as the aspects of school status of school physical safety in relation to the physical safety of children with special needs in Kitui County.

The learner’s attitude towards the current physical safety situation at the selected special primary schools in Kitui County was negative learners attitude towards their physical safety had negatively influenced on the overall performance of both curricular and non curricula activities in the selected schools and units. It had as well impacted negatively on the enrolment of children with special needs in Kitui County. This study investigated the status of school physical safety and security features of the special schools physical environment as well as the aspects of school status of school physical safety in relation to the physical safety of children with special needs in Kitui County.
Challenges facing special needs education school management in provision of physical safety for children with special needs in Kitui County were identified to have negative impacts on the general performance of the special needs schools. The researcher focused on the status of school physical safety and security features of the special school’s physical environment as well as the aspects of school status of school physical safety in relation to the physical safety of children with special needs in Kitui County. In the study findings, some strategies that could help to mitigate against the challenges facing the special needs education school management in the provision of physical safety to the children with special needs were revealed. The following strategies were identified; Adherence to physical safety regulations in relation to children with special needs in the selected schools should be given priority in the Kenyan education system. If Kenya aims at a rising the standard of educational achievement for all pupils with special needs, ensuring that all pupils have access to similar syllabus content would also be a helpful strategy. To improve the status of school physical safety, all stakeholders dealing with children with special needs would need to collaborate in coming up with a working policy framework on the physical safety of all learners including the children with special needs.

Status of special primary schools/units physical safety can impact positively or negatively on overall performance of children with special needs in the special primary schools/units. However, physical safety within the special primary schools/units is assumed by many, but it is perhaps a less understood determinant to overall performance for special needs children and overall participation in basic education.
Unsafe physical status in many regular primary schools might be one of the reasons as to why many learners with special needs have refused to enroll for their primary school education together with their regular counterparts.

5.3 Conclusion of the Study

The intent of this study was to find out the status of physical safety in special primary schools/units in relation to children with special needs in Kitui County and suggest strategies for minimization of the challenges facing the school management in provision of good and safe environment for children with special needs. A person becomes one with special needs when his or her capacity to participate in and benefit from regular mainstream education is restricted due to an enduring physical, sensory, mental, health or learning disability. Education for children with special needs may be provided in mainstream regular school in special classes or in purely selected special primary schools/units. All learners including children with special needs have a constitutional right to free primary education. Therefore, the children with special needs have the right to free primary education in Kenya (GOK, 2012). Likewise, safety in schools ought to be a right to all children and more so to those with special needs.

The study was guided by the following objectives:

i. To establish the current status of physical safety in schools/units in relation to children with special needs in Kitui County;

ii. To establish the current threats to physical safety in relation to safety for children with special needs in Kitui County;

iii. To establish the learners' attitudes towards the status of schools/units physical safety among special needs special primary schools/units in Kitui County;
iv. To establish the challenges facing the school management in provision of physical safety for children with special needs in Kitui County and to suggest strategies for mitigation of challenges facing special primary schools/units management in provision of physical safety for children with special needs in Kitui County.

In this study it was noted that physical safety for children with special needs, is of a significant concern. Beyond teaching/learning their teachers need to tell them not to walk in front of an oncoming vehicle or that fire burns leading to physical injuries. However, teaching children with special needs about the danger related to their physical safety is difficult. Special education teachers might not be able to tell if the children with special needs are focused enough to know what dangers they were taught or the pupils with special needs might not be able to give feedback on which their teachers can get to understand that their learners have understood. Children with special needs should be treated as special pupils while in their special primary schools/units to ensure their physical safety. This was one of the reasons for which this study underscored the importance of physical safety of children with special needs that are enrolled for their primary school education in special primary schools/units. It is the duty of the special primary schools/units' management to supervise and watch the children with special needs to ensure their safety against physical hazards that can bring about accidents and injuries.

Status of special primary schools/units physical safety can impact positively or negatively on overall performance of children with special needs in the special primary schools/units. However, physical safety within the special primary
schools/units is assumed by many, but it is perhaps a less understood determinant to overall performance of special primary schools/units and overall participation in basic education for children with special needs. Unsafe physical status in many regular mainstream primary schools might be one of the reasons as to why many learners with special needs have refused to enroll for their primary school education together with their regular counterparts.

5.4 Recommendations of the Study

This study investigated the status of special primary schools/units’ physical safety and security features of the special schools and units’ physical environment as well as the aspects of status in special primary schools/units physical safety in relation to the physical safety of children with special needs in Kitui County. Based on the reviewed literature and the revelations of the study findings the researcher was able to make some recommendations.

The following were the recommendations of the study:

1. Special schools and units should implement school safety initiatives that consider physical safety through regular inspection to buildings, wirings and fire extinguishers.

2. Effective school safety efforts should utilize evidence-based practices to ensure the well being of all students as well as their physical safety.

3. Reasonable building security measures, such as secure doors, lighted and monitored corridors or paths, and check-in-checkout system for visitor’s should be put in all public special schools/units.
4. The Ministry of Education should provide all special schools/units in Kitui county with funds to implement safety standards and guidelines and improve on the coordination and follow up of all stakeholders on the safety policy implementation process.

5. Adequate learning supports and policies should be present to provide a continuum of services that respond to the needs of all students in special schools and units. Pupils with specific special needs may be enrolled in the mainstream regular primary schools together with their regular counterparts. Special primary schools/units' management should ensure physical safety against equipments, physical surfaces; food/water and infrastructure for children with special needs.

6. School management should adhere to physical safety regulations in relation to children with special needs in the selected special primary schools/units.

7. To minimize the safety threats currently evidenced in the selected special primary schools/units, collaborations should be initiated within the Kenyan government and with relevant stakeholders to foster strategic thinking and planning on the achievement of safety for children with special needs in the special primary schools/units.

8. School management should fit smoke detectors in every building as well as fire extinguishers to avert fire accidents.
5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies

The following further studies were suggested for further investigation of the status of special primary schools/units physical safety problem regionally, nationally and locally in Kitui County:

1. A further study was suggested on adherence to physical safety regulations in relation to children with special needs in the selected special primary schools/units in Kitui County and elsewhere. The importance of enhancing improvement in the safety precautions for the safety of the children with special needs in the selected special primary schools/units also needs to be researched.

2. A further study was suggested on how well all members of selected special primary schools/units were equipped with first aid skills and their preparedness just in case of any unforeseen physical injury to the children with special needs in the selected special primary schools/units in Kitui County and elsewhere. Finally, more studies are needed that focus on identifying model schools that have shown great reductions in school safety hazards. Learning new practices from a wide array of remarkably safe schools could provide insights on the different ways schools have tackled the problem.

3. This study was conducted only in one county and therefore there is need for further study to be extended to other counties to enhance generalizability of the findings to validate them.

4. Research should be conducted on the implementation of safety standards and guidelines on the outcomes and quality learning in public schools in the county.
REFERENCES

Alberta Learning Special Education Board (1999): *School climate, in supporting safe, secure and caring special primary school/units in Alberta*. Edmonton


Appendix 1: Interview Schedule for Head Teachers

The status of special primary school/units physical safety in relation to children with special needs: A case of Kitui County, Kenya.

**Questionnaire**

**number**

**Date**

**Preamble**

My name is Joyce Mwikali Mutwii, a postgraduate student at School of Education, Kenyatta University. I am carrying out a study on “The status of special primary school/units physical safety in Relation to children with special needs: A case of Kitui County, Kenya. I would be very grateful if you respond to my questions honestly and exhaustively which is very important for the success of this study.

**General Instructions**

Please respond by ticking [✓] in the itemized questions or by writing on the spaces provided where applicable: Please do not indicate your name anywhere in this questionnaire

**Section A: Respondents characteristics**

1. **Gender:** Male [ ] Female [ ]

2. Highest level of Special training achieved
   - Certificate [ ] Diploma [ ] Bachelors Degree [ ]
   - Masters Degree [ ] PhD [ ]

3. Number of years as a Head teacher in selected special primary school/units
   - Less than 1 year [ ] 1-5 years [ ] 6-10 years [ ]
   - 11-15 years [ ] 16-20 years [ ] and more than 20 years [ ]

**Section B: Status of special primary school/units physical safety in relation to children with special needs**

1. How many per class are the children with special needs in the school

2. Are there specially designed toilets for children with special needs in the school?
   - Prompt for a; Yes [ ] or No [ ] in their responses
3. Are there some mobile toilet chairs for children with special needs in the school?
   Prompt for a; Yes [ ] or No [ ] in their responses

4. How often do MOE officials visit the school to evaluate adherence to safety regulations? Prompt for; [1]-Very often; [2]-often; [3] Sometimes; [4]-not often; [5]-not at all- responses

5. Is the government doing enough to ensure safety for children with special needs in the school? Prompt for a; Yes [ ] No [ ] in their responses

6. Suggest what should be done to improve the status of special primary school/units physical safety for children with special needs in the school? .................................................................
   ...........................................................................................................
   ...........................................................................................................
   ...........................................................................................................

   The End

   Thank you for your co-operation
Appendix 2: Questionnaire for Teachers/Support Staff

The status of special primary school/units physical safety in relation to children with special needs: A case of Kitui County, Kenya.

Questionnaire number

Date

Preamble

My name is Joyce Mwikali Mutwii, a postgraduate student at School of Education, Kenyatta University. I am carrying out a study on "The status of special primary school/units physical safety in Relation to children with special needs: A case of Kitui County, Kenya. I would be very grateful if you respond to my questions honestly and exhaustively which is very important for the success of this study.

General Instructions

Please respond by ticking [✓] in the itemized questions or by writing on the spaces provided where applicable. Please do not indicate your name anywhere in this questionnaire.

Section A: Respondents Characteristics

1. Gender: Male [ ] Female [ ]

2. Number of years as a teacher/support staff in this school

   Less than 1 year [ ] 1-5 years [ ] 6-10 years [ ]
   11-15 years [ ] 16-20 years [ ] and more than 20 years [ ]

Section B: Status of special primary school/units physical safety in relation to children with special needs

Using the 5-point likert rating scale below; rate the statements given in relation to safety of children with special needs in your school

[1.] Strongly agree
[2.] Agree
[3.] Not Sure
[4.] Disagree
[5.] Strongly disagree
3. The school is safe and well maintained in relation to children with special needs

4. There are fire extinguishers which are in good working conditions in the school

5. The security guards are well trained on physical safety for children with special needs

6. Strangers are not allowed to enter the school without proper identification

7. Children with special needs are not handed over to anyone without proper evidence

8. Everyone in the school is aware of the dos and don’ts in case of an emergency

9. There are safe ramps and floors in classrooms for safety of special need pupils

10. Electrical wires are covered and checked ensuring safety from electric fault

11. The condition of the classroom, toilets/latrines and dormitories is safe.

12. Water and food used in the school is safe for safety of children with special needs.

13. What changes would you make to improve the status of special primary school/units physical safety for children with special needs in your school if you are given an opportunity to suggest how to beef up safety in the school? ...........

The End

Thank you for your co-operation
Appendix 3: Questionnaire for Children with Special Needs

The status of special primary school/units physical safety in relation to children with special needs: A case of Kitui County, Kenya.

Date

Preamble
My name is Joyce Mwikali Mutwii, a postgraduate student at School of Education, Kenyatta University. I am carrying out a study on “The status of special primary school/units physical safety in Relation to children with special needs: A case of Kitui County, Kenya. I would be very grateful if you respond to my questions honestly and exhaustively which is very important for the success of this study.

General Instructions
Please respond by ticking [✓] in the itemized questions or by writing on the spaces provided where applicable. Please do not indicate your name anywhere in this questionnaire

SECTION A: Respondents characteristics
1. Gender: Male [✓] Female
2. Your age: 10-13 years [✓] 14-18 years [✓] 19-22 years [✓] more than 22 years

SECTION B: Status of special primary school/units physical safety in relation to children with special needs
3. What are the most accidents that occur to learners in school base your choice on the given 4 categories of accidents? Falls [✓] Poisoning
Drowning [✓] Burns

4. Using the 5-point scale below rate the school status of special primary school/units physical safety for children with special needs
Very satisfactory [1]; Satisfactory [2]; Not sure [3]; Unsatisfactory [4]; Very unsatisfactory [5]
5. Does the school have specially designed toilets or pit latrines?
   Yes [ ] No [ ]

6. Does the school provide safe food to children with special needs?
   Yes [ ] No [ ]

7. Does the school provide clean water to children with special needs?
   Yes [ ] No [ ]

8. Do you feel protected in terms of physical safety while in school?
   Yes [ ] No [ ]

9. Do teachers listen to your complaints concerning your safety needs?
   Yes [ ] No [ ]

10. Use the given 5-points scale to rate how you like or dislike the status of special primary school/units physical safety of electrical wires/lamps and floors in your classrooms in relation to safety of children with special needs?
    Very satisfactory [1]; Satisfactory [2]; Not sure [3]; Unsatisfactory [4]; Very unsatisfactory [5]

11. As one of the pupils with special educational needs; what would you suggest to be changed in your school to improve your physical safety? .................................................................
    ...........................................................................................................................................
    ...........................................................................................................................................
    ...........................................................................................................................................

    The End

    Thank you for your co-operation
Appendix 4: Observation Checklist

The researcher designed the following items as her field observation guidelines:

1. Are there specially designed toilets for children with special needs in the school?
   Yes [ ] No [ ]

2. Are there some mobile toilet chairs for children with special needs in the school?
   Yes [ ] No [ ]

3. Is the school safe and well maintained in relation to children with special needs?
   Yes [ ] No [ ]

4. Are there fire extinguishers, in good working conditions in the school?
   Yes [ ] No [ ]

5. Are conditions of electric lamps and floors in classrooms safe for children with special needs?
   Yes [ ] No [ ]

6. Are all electrical wires covered to ensure safety of children with special needs?
   Yes [ ] No [ ]

7. Does the condition of the dormitories ensure physical safety for children with special needs?
   Yes [ ] No [ ]

8. Are conditions of playing fields safe for children with special needs?
   Yes [ ] No [ ]
Appendix 5: Time Frame

This Time Frame presents a summary of the study activities from preliminary gathering of literature materials and proposal writing period by April, 2013 upto October, 2013 when the final research proposal printing, hard cover binding and project report submission was done showing the various stages through which the study was conducted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of the Various Study Activities</th>
<th>Range of Timeframe for each Study Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mobilization of Related Literature Materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Writing and Submission</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrections of Proposal by Supervisors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Project Data Collection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis and Draft Report Writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrections of Report by Supervisors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Report Hard Cover Final Binding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This time frame was author-sourced using average estimation of the expected time-period for conducting particular study activities from initial collection of documentary materials through proposal writing, data collection to compilation of the final research project report.
Appendix 6: Budget for the Study

This section presents the cost of conducting the whole research project from scratch through data collection to compilation of the final research proposal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit Cost in KShs.</th>
<th>Total Cost in KShs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Duplicating papers (reams)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>500.00</td>
<td>3,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ruler</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>File</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>400.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rubber</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Biro pens</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25.00</td>
<td>250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Computer services</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6,000.00</td>
<td>12,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Typing, Printing and binding</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7,200.00</td>
<td>14,400.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sub-total stationery = 30,250.00

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit Cost in KShs.</th>
<th>Total Cost in KShs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>550.00</td>
<td>11,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Out of pocket</td>
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<td>300.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>900.00</td>
<td>18,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Assistant researcher</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7,100.00</td>
<td>28,400.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sub-total other expenses = 63,400.00

Total Cost = Sub-total cost stationery + Sub-total cost other expenses = 93,650.00

Miscellaneous cost 10% of the Total Cost = 10/100 × 93,650.00 = 9,365.00

Grand Total Cost = 103,015.00

Stationery and computer services total estimate cost was KShs. 30,250.00 and the other expenses cost is KShs. 63,400.00 with a 10% miscellaneous expenses costing KShs. 9,365.00, the total estimated cost for the entire study was KShs. 103,015.00.
Appendix 7: Letter of Approval

KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL

E-mail: kubps@yahoo.com
        dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke
Website: www.ku.ac.ke

P.O. Box 43844, 00100
NAIROBI, KENYA
Tel. 810901 Ext. 57530

Internal Memo

FROM: Dean, Graduate School
TO: Ms. Joyce Mwikali Mutwii
     C/o Educ. Management, Policy & Curriculum Studies Department
     KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

DATE: 15th October, 2013
REF: E55/CE/22880/10

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

This is to inform you that the Graduate School Board at its meeting of 2nd October 2013 approved your M.Ed Project Research Proposal entitled, "Status of Primary School Physical Safety in Relation to Overall Performance of Special Needs Pupils in Kifui County, Kenya."

You may now proceed with your Data Collection.

JOSEPHINE KENDI
FOR: DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL


Supervisors:
1. Ms. Lilian Boit
   KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

2. Dr. Joseph Mungai
   KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

JK/fwk

18 OCT 2013
Appendix 8: Letter to Ministry of higher Education

KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL

E-mail: kubps@yahoo.com
       dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke
Website: www.ku.ac.ke

P.O. Box 43844, 00100
NAIROBI, KENYA
Tel. 8710901 Ext. 57530

Our Ref: E55/CE/22880/10
Date: 15th October 2013

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR MS. JOYCE MWIKALI MUTWII - REG.
NO. E55/CE/22880/10

I write to introduce Ms. Joyce Mwikali Mutwii who is a Postgraduate Student of this University. She is registered for an M.Ed degree programme in the Department of Educational Management, Policy & Curriculum Studies in the School of Education.

Ms. Mutwii intends to conduct research for a thesis project entitled, "Status of Primary School Physical Safety in Relation to Overall Performance of Special Needs Pupils in Kitui County, Kenya."

Any assistance given will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

MRS. LUCY N. MBAABU
FOR: DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL

LNM/fwk
Appendix 9: Letter from District Education Officer

Ref. No. KTI/G/192/190

Date: 22/10/2013

Heads of
1. Special Schools
2. Special Units Schools
KITUI COUNTY.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION: MRS. JOYCE MWIKALI MUTWII.

The above named is a postgraduate student of Kenyatta University.

Madam Mutwii intends to conduct research for a thesis project entitled “Status of Primary schools safety in relation to overall performance of Special Needs Pupils in Kitui County”.

Kindly assist her to collect data for the purpose of her research.

For: DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICER
P. O. Box 35
KITUI

KILONZO P. MBIOLONZI
FOR: DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICER
KITUI CENTRAL
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2213471, 2241349, 310571, 2219420
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249
Email: secretary@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying please quote

Ref: No. NACOSTI/P/13/7570/327

Joyce Mwikali Mulae
Kenyatta University
P.O.Box 43844-00100
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on “Status of primary school physical safety in relation to overall performance of special needs pupils in Kitui County, Kenya,” I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in Kitui County for a period ending 15th December, 2013.

You are advised to report to the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Kitui County before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf of the research report/thesis to our office.

DR. M. K. RUGUTT, PHD., HSc.
DEPUTY COMMISSION SECRETARY
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
The County Director of Education
Kitui County.

14th November, 2013
Appendix 11: Permit

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT

MS. JOYCE MUKAI MIHUA
Student No. 7570/327
Of KENYATTA UNIVERSITY, 964-90200
Khitu, has been permitted to conduct
research in Kitui County on the topic: STATUS OF PRIMARY
SCHOOL PHYSICAL SAFETY IN RELATION TO OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF SPECIAL
NEEDS PUPILS IN KITUI COUNTY, KENYA

Permit No. 6, NACOSTIP/13/7570/327
Date of Issue: 14th November, 2013
Fee Received: K 630 00

for the period ending 15th December, 2015

Signature

National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation

CONDITIONS

1. You must report to the County Commissioner and the County Education Officer of the area before you start your research. Failure to do that may lead to the cancellation of your permit.
2. Government Officers will not be interviewed without prior appointment.
3. No questionnaire will be used unless it has been approved.
4. Excavation, filming and collection of biological samples are subject to further permission from the relevant Government Ministries.
5. You are required to submit at least two (2) hard copies and one (1) soft copy of your final report.
6. The Government of Kenya reserves the right to modify the conditions of this permit including its cancellation without notice.

RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT

CONDITIONS